KASHMIR AND KASHGHAR.

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KASHMÍR AND KASHGHAR.

A NARRATIVE

OF

THE JOURNEY OF THE EMBASSY TO KASHGHAR IN 1873-74.

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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II.

CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER V.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER XI.

CHAPTER XII.

PREFACE.

THE region lying immediately beyond the northern frontier of our Indian Empire and comprehensively designated Chinese Tartary, has during the last quarter of a century, from time to time, attracted the attention of Europe, owing to the steady extension of the Russian dominion upon its northern borders. This attention, at no time very fixed upon the mind of the public, received a fresh impetus by the events and issues of that remarkable revolution which in 1862–63 severed the connection of this region from the rest of the Chinese Empire, and in the following years led to the conquest of its southern portion by a successful adventurer from an adjoining principality.

It has now for us acquired a special interest, no less by reason of the intercourse which, in the efforts to develop a trade in that direction, has sprung up between us in India and the ruler of this newly-constituted state of Central Asia, than by that of the peculiar relations in which he stands to his Russian neighbour. And the questions naturally arise—What is the new principality of Kashghar? And who is its founder Atalik Ghazi?

It is not my purpose in these pages to enter on the theme of Central Asian politics, nor to attempt an investigation of the causes which have conduced to the

successful establishment of a new Muhammadan state on the ruins of the Chinese rule in this part of the Asiatic Continent; nor yet to inquire into the motives for the revival of a decayed Islam in this extreme limit of the Musalman polity of Central Asia. Neither is it any part of my purpose in these pages to discuss the merits, or question the wisdom of one line of policy over another, in respect to the relations we are by force of neighbourhood involved in with the several states of Central Asia.

These subjects have each and all of them a special interest, but of a nature much too important to be cursorily treated in the course of a popular narrative of travel in the region of their development. It will suffice, for the information of the general reader, simply in this place to review in brief terms some of the principal events which have combined to draw us into friendly relations with the successful usurper, whom fortune has drawn from the obscurity of his own home of discord and dismemberment to figure in the light of a conqueror, and with a fame which has been noised over the world more by the force of fortuitous circumstances, than through any individual merits of his own.

That great Muhammadan revival which, during the past sixteen or eighteen years, has disturbed the peace of the Chinese Empire to the extent of seriously threatening the stability of its ancient régime, and which from time to time has been brought to the notice of the western world under the different names of Tayping rebellion (by some considered a Christian movement), Panthay insurrection, and Tungani revolution, according to the several peoples promoting it in the different parts of the Empire, though resulting in various issues in the several provinces, was of uniform character so far as concerned

the persistent efforts of the rebels to subvert the constituted government in favour of their own advancement to the supreme control of affairs. Or, in other words, to supplant on the soil of China the state religion of Budha by the majesty of Islam—the doctrine of Muhammad.

In this place it concerns us only to trace very briefly the progress and consequences of that widespread movement in the westernmost frontier province of the Empire—the province which has been made familiar to Europeans under the name of Eastern or Chinese Turkistan—and to describe the origin of our intercourse and relations with the present ruler of that portion of the region comprised in the territory of Kashghar.

Chinese Tartary under the imperial government comprised the two main divisions of Zunghar, or Mugholistan, and Kashghar, or Eastern Turkistan, on the north and south respectively of the intersecting range of the Tian Shan or "Celestial Mountains." It constituted the provincial government of Ila, which was administered by a viceroy whose seat was at the capital, called Ghulja or Kuldja.

The northern division was called by the Chinese Tian Shan Peh Lu, or "The way north of the Celestial Mountains," and the southern division was similarly called Tian Shan Nan Lu, or "The way south of the Celestial Mountains."

The first of these has lapsed in great part from China to Russia, and the former viceregal capital of Ila is now a Russian garrison town, linked by telegraph to St Petersburg; whilst the most important part of Zunghar is now an integral portion of the Russian dominion in Asia, the boundary of which in this direction marches directly with that of Kashghar, and is, in fact, immediately in contact with its people through the nomad

Kirghiz on both sides of the border, who are for the most part subjects of Russia.

As to the other division, with which alone we are here interested, events have followed a somewhat different course.

When in 1862 the ferment of Islamite rebellion spread from the central states of China to the provinces on its western frontier, it first exploded in Kansuh by the rise in revolt of the Tungani of Hochow or Salar, in which city the revolution was inaugurated by a general massacre and plunder of the Budhist population.

From this principal seat of the Tungani people the leaven of sedition, thus successfully set in motion, very rapidly pervaded the petty states of the provincial government to the westward, in which the garrisons of the imperial troops were largely composed of Tunganis—their brethren and co-religionists. They were Chinese Musalmans of the *Shafi'* sect, and had during the preceding half century proved their loyalty to the Pekin government by steadfast devotion and faithful service against four successive Musalman invasions from Khocand, and were in consequence fully trusted by their Budhist fellow-countrymen.

These invasions from Khocand were conducted by leaders of the expatriated Khoja family—descendants of the Khoja Afac who, two centuries ago, had usurped the government of the country from the hereditary Mughal Khans of the Chaghtay line—and were in no way connected with the Tungani revolt, which originated independently from the opposite direction; and hence the reliance placed upon the loyalty of the Tunganis by the Chinese government.

On this occasion, however, though in no way subservient to the Khoja interest working from the retreat of

the family in Khocand, but, on the contrary, steadily opposed to the claims advanced by them as the hereditary rulers of the country, the Tunganis here, imbued with the spirit of disaffection against the Pekin government—the Manchu rule—which had declared itself so violently amongst their brethren in the principal seats of their strength to the eastward, quickly followed the example of their confrères there, and everywhere almost simultaneously rose in revolt against the imperial government, and everywhere enacted a similar role of massacre and plunder.

In less than two years they had, everywhere in this wide province of Chinese Turkistan, overthrown the imperial government, and plunged the country into an abyss of destruction, bloodshed, and untold sufferings—a prey to the contentions of a host of claimants for participation in the spoil.

In the first burst of the storm the Khitay, or "the Budhist Chinese troops," composing in part the garrisons of the eastern towns up to Acsu and Uch Turfan inclusive, fell victims to the rage of the rebels, and were, with their coreligionist traders and residents, massacred wholesale. But in the western cities, from Khutan to Kashghar, including the military post of Maralbashi, the Khitay shut themselves up in their forts, and held out against the rebels and other enemies for longer or shorter periods, till finally, pressed by strict siege, and bereft of the last hopes of succour from home they, each in turn, with an uniformity of procedure as if by preconcerted arrangement, blew up their forts, and perished in the ruins of the explosions.

The Tungani having thus destroyed the established government which for a hundred years had ruled the country, and despite the repeated insurrections excited

in the western towns by the Khoja family of Khocand, had raised it to a pitch of prosperity and wealth such as it had not known since the decline of the Chaghtay rule in the fourteenth century, now found themselves without a recognised leader, and with no definite plan of operation, nor any acknowledged object of attainment.

In this state of aimless confusion their chiefs fell to quarrelling amongst themselves, and being men who had always occupied a subordinate position, and who were without the talents requisite for command and organisation, they very soon succumbed to the ambition of more able heads and stronger minds.

First and foremost amongst these last was the chief of a numerous family of Muhammadan divines, which had for several centuries been settled at Kucha as the hereditary custodians of a very sacred shrine in the city suburbs, dedicated to the perpetuation of the memory of some early martyr to the cause of the faith in these distant lands, who had been canonised for his services in the propagation of Islam.

This family of priests had, from the sacred nature of their calling, and the influential position by common consent accorded to them in society, acquired a considerable control over the minds of the people through the agency of their spiritual offices; and, though amply provided for in respect to temporal requirements by very liberal grants of rent free lands, they did not neglect such opportunities as the circumstances of their position offered to increase the stock of their worldly possessions *pari passu* with that of their spiritual control; and at the time of this revolution they were, in point of wealth and influence, the foremost of the Chinese subjects residents of Kucha, independently of the rank they held in society as Khojas. The term Khoja, it may be here

noted, means "gentleman," and is applied as a title to wealthy merchants and divines of a certain recognised position, much in the same manner as we employ the terms "esquire" and "reverend."

The head of this Kucha family was one Rashuddin or Rashiduddin. He took the leading part in the control of affairs immediately after the overthrow of the Chinese authority, and appointing the different members of his family to the several local governments, now deprived of their proper officials, very speedily secured the Tungani—a scattered flock of sheep without a shepherd—as his easy tools for the establishment of an independent Khoja kingdom under his own sovereign control as king.

So sudden was the overthrow of the Chinese rule, and so indifferent were the people as to their successors in the government, that Rashuddin, in the course of a few short months, and without any serious opposition, was acknowledged king; and as such received the *zakat* and *'ushar* from all the country between Yarkand and Turfan, the several district governments of which were held by a host of his sons, nephews, and other relations; though not everywhere with that concord of action and unison of sentiment which is necessary for successful administration.

But whilst Rashuddin in the north was consolidating his authority over the states that had acknowledged his rule, the states of Khutan on the south and Kashghar on the west had already passed into the possession of two other adventurers, whom the circumstances of the time and locality had brought to the front as leaders, and set at the head of affairs in their respective places.

These were the Mufti Habibulla, an aged priest of Khutan, who had recently returned from a pilgrimage to

Mecca with enlarged ideas of the world beyond the limited horizon of his own secluded home, and Sadic Beg, a barbarous nomad, the freebooter chief of the Kirghiz of Kashghar.

The country was divided between these three self-constituted rulers, when, in the first days of 1865, Khoja Buzurg Khan, the lineal descendant of the Khoja Afac, issuing from his retreat in Khocand, crossed the Tarik Dawan passes to essay the recovery of the throne of his ancestors. At the time he set out on this expedition he was in the camp of the Khocand ruler, 'Alim Culi, who had usurped the government from Khudayar, the rightful Khan, and was at this juncture at the head of his troops and partisans opposing the Russian advance against Tashkand. The Capchac leader, little reckoning the power of his mighty foe, encouraged the enterprise of the Khoja in the hope of reasserting the Khocand influence in the western states of Kashghar, and dismissed him with best wishes for his success.

'Alim Culi, under the circumstances pressing, could not spare any of his troops for service with the Khoja, but appointed one of his trusty lieutenants and firm adherents to accompany Buzurg Khan as military commandant of such troops as he might raise at Khocand; whither the two repaired from Tashkand, in November 1864, to complete the arrangements for their enterprise against Kashghar.

Buzurg Khan set out from Khocand towards the close of the year with a following of only sixty-six men under the command of Ya'cub Beg, *Báturbáshi*, or "Leader of the Braves" (the lieutenant lent by 'Alim Culi), an Uzbak of Piskat near Tashkand, who had successively held the rank of *Coshbegi* or "Lord of a shire", under the governments of Mallah Khan, Khudayar Khan, and

'Alim Culi in Khocand. On arrival at Khashghar the Khoja was welcomed by the people as a deliverer—for they were reduced to the extremity of despair under the oppression of the hungry Sadic, and the violent excesses of his lawless Kirghiz—and he was forthwith established in the palace as king. His first act was to appoint his Baturbashi to the restoration of order in the city, and the organisation of an army from amongst the Khocand and Afghan residents found within it.

It is unnecessary here to follow in detail the career of this remarkable character, nor that of his master, the Khoja Buzurg Khan. An account of his life, compiled from such information as I was able to collect during our stay in the country, has been submitted to government with my "Historical Sketch of Kashghar, and General Description of the Country." Suffice it to say that the latter, true to the character of his fraternity, on the realisation of so readily conceded a throne, at once made over the conduct of affairs to his general, and himself straightway launched out into a course of unrestrained debauchery and licentiousness; whilst the other —his Baturbashi—prompted by the instincts of his ambitious nature, and fortified by the experience acquired during the vicissitudes of a quarter of a century of usurpations, discords, strifes, and contentions which had been the lot of his life in his own country, took advantage of the opportunity to seize the government for himself, and gradually to extend his authority over the whole country as the "champion of Islam," under the religious title of "Atalik Ghazi"—a career in which he was favoured by the circumstances of the time; namely, the weakness of the Pekin government on the one side, and the occupation of the Russians on the other.

It was about this period—the arrival of the Khocand,

or Andijan party, in the country—that news of the revolution in Kashghar came dribbling across the passes into India with the caravans of the petty traders of Yarkand and Khutan. For these men now flocked over into Kashmir in greater numbers than before, as those of Kashghar, Acsu, and the other northern cities of the territory resorted to the Russian markets in that direction, to procure the commodities of which they had been deprived so suddenly by the abrupt severance of their communications with China.

The appearance of these foreign traders in the Panjab, and their glowing account of the requirements of their country, now cut off from its natural source of supplies by the overthrow of the government of which they had heretofore been the subjects, soon secured for them the interest and support of some commercial friends on the line of their route, with the view of creating a trade with the countries on the north of the Himalaya.

As a result of the representations made on this subject, the government in 1866 established the Palampur fair, with a very liberal outlay, to encourage the development of trade with Central Asia by the route through Little Tibat. The Yarkand traders appear to have appreciated its advantages, and their professions of goodwill and gratitude for the cordial reception accorded them were by some viewed in a hopeful light as sure prognostics of the early development of a really profitable trade with a region supposed to be of vast extent, and represented as teeming with a population of scores of millions of people who wanted tea, and cottons, and many other stuffs which they could not now procure through the usual channels of supply; and for which they were dependent upon us, if we would but exert ourselves to meet their wants, and reap, by way of reward for

our trouble, clear profits of from fifty to seventy-five per cent., as were already realised by the petty traders —Sikh and Afghan—from the Panjab on the small ventures carried over the passes by them.

For on this route, unlike those through the territories of our western neighbours of Balochistan and Afghanistan, there were no claimants of blackmail, whose fellows robbed and murdered you even after paying the demands of the hungry crew; but there were risks of another kind. The trader by this route had more to dread from the dangers and difficulties of the country than from the attacks of banditti or the depredations of tax-collectors; and the loss of a few fingers or toes from frost-bite, with the death of a greater or less number of cattle from the toils of the journey and the inhospitable nature of the region and climate, were the worst of the hazards he had to provide against.

Stimulated, however, by the tempting prospects of so handsome a profit, and encouraged by the free access afforded to the new market, some native traders essayed the journey, and returned satisfied with the success of their operations. In 1868, following this, the trade received a fresh impetus by the journey of an enterprising tea-planter who, emerging from the seclusion of his little plantation in Kangra, took a selected assortment of goods to Yarkand.

Mr R. B. Shaw has given to the world a most interesting account of his journey to and experiences in the country, and has pourtrayed the peculiar characteristics of the people—so different from those of India—with a singular fidelity; but he has hardly done justice to the natural obstacles of the country, nor clearly pointed out the impracticable difficulties of the passes as a trade route at any time. And whilst laying stress

on the very natural anxiety of Atalik Ghazi (whose family had become Russian subjects, and whose native country had "for ever" passed within the territories of the Russian Empire, even before he had established himself in the position he had usurped from the master he was sent to serve; whilst his troops were either Russian subjects, or those of the Khan restored by that Power to his throne in Khocand) for an alliance with, and recognition by the British Government, he has enlarged on the grand prospects of a commercial intercourse with the country whose markets had been already, in the time of the Chinese rule, stocked by Russian merchants. And he has betrayed, by the complacent endurance of the rigid restrictions of the close imprisonment imposed upon him during the six months of his stay in the country, an amount of enthusiasm for the cause of his adoption which may serve to explain in some measure the omission to note certain facts as to the population and resources of the country, and the peculiar conditions of its political existence, which under more favourable circumstances must have prominently arrested the attention of the traveller.

Mr Shaw and Mr Hayward, the latter of whom ventured to explore the country in the cause of geographical science, entered the country together from the south at the very time that Captain Reinthal and some Russian merchants, escorted by a party of Cossacs, entered it from the north. They were detained in their progress to the court of Atalik Ghazi till the Russian officer had concluded the business he had been sent to negotiate, and were then conducted to Kashghar as Mr Shaw has described in his well-known book.

Messrs Shaw and Hayward were not the first Europeans who in recent years have penetrated to Kashghar

from our side of the passes. The interest of the British public in the countries of Tartary was first revived in recent times by the enterprise of that learned scientific traveller, Adolphe Schlagentweit, who, in 1857, penetrated to Kashghar and, arriving there during the revolt raised by the rebel Khoja Wali Khan, fell an unfortunate victim of that bloodthirsty tyrant's madness.

In 1865 Mr W. R. Johnson, of the Great Trigonometrical Survey, whilst working on the frontier of the territory of the Maharaja of Kashmir, descended the Tibat highlands to the northward, and in September—October of that year visited Khutan as the guest of its new king, Habibulla Padshah, at the time that Atalik Ghazi was yet the Coshbegi Ya'cub Beg in command of the troops of the Khoja Buzurg Khan installed as king at Kashghar, and was on his behalf contesting the possession of Yarkand against the party holding it for Rashuddin of Kucha. Following Mr Shaw's return to India in 1869, came Mirza Shadi, as envoy (the capacity in which he had the year before proceeded to the Russian capital) from Atalik Ghazi to the Viceroy. He returned in 1870 with Mr Forsyth's mission, of which Dr Geo. Henderson and Mr Shaw were the other members. Dr Henderson has given us an account of this journey, of the difficulties they encountered on the road, and the disasters that befell their baggage. Yet notwithstanding these hindrances he has, much to his credit, with the able aid of his co-author Mr Hume, and other coadjutors, enhanced the interest of his work by a valuable illustration of the ornithology and botany of the regions the party traversed. But he has besides—and this is what interests us here—introduced us to Cazi Ya'cub Khan, the future envoy with whom I shall hope to make my readers better acquainted in the following narrative as Haji Tora.

The return of Mr Forsyth's party to India after a very brief stay at Yarkand, was followed by the arrival of Ahrar Khan, Tora, as envoy from Atalik Ghazi to the Viceroy; and the reception at Kashghar of the Russian embassy under Baron Kaulbars for the negotiation of a commercial treaty. A few months after the departure of the Russians, satisfied with the adjustment of their business, Ahrar Khan returned to Kashghar from his mission to India, and immediately, in November 1872, our friend Sayyid Ya'cub Khan—the Cazi of Dr Henderson's narrative—was despatched as the envoy of Atalik Ghazi to the Viceroy of India and the Sultan of Turkey. And this brings us to the despatch of the British Embassy to Kashghar in 1873-74.

With the works of Mr Shaw and Dr Henderson already before the public, it may be considered a presumption on my part to obtrude with a further account of a country already so fully described by them; but being convinced of the importance to us of the latest and freest information regarding the countries beyond our Indian possessions in that direction, the more especially on account of the magnitude of the interests involved by the character of the policy—whatever it may be—which our statesmen may adopt towards the yet independent states of Central Asia, I venture to hope that even the smallest item added to the stock of knowledge already made public concerning the state of society and civilisation, the history and resources—natural and industrial—of these states, and especially of the new addition to their number by the establishment of the independent Khanate of Kashghar, may not be unacceptable; particularly since the affairs of those distant and inaccessible regions, at this time more than ever, claim an unusual interest as much amongst the Continental nations of Europe as

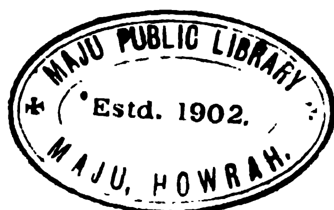
amongst our insular public, and our Indian subjects who are so close to the theatre of their progress.

With this intent therefore—eschewing the discussion of politics as being beyond the purpose before me, and avoiding a repetition of what has been already told by my predecessors on this field of travel—I venture to offer a plain account of the journey and experiences of the embassy to Kashghar in 1873–74, with such matters of interest regarding the people and the country as our opportunities enabled us to obtain.

Finally, in committing my book to the notice of the public, I have only to add that, it has been put together at odd hours in the midst of a holiday after three years of continuous hard work of a varied and onerous nature, and under circumstances depriving me of reference to records and authorities.

H. W. B.

ALGIERS, 28*th March* 1875.



KASHMIR AND KASHGHAR.

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE taking the reader across the passes, a brief introductory notice of the country beyond them will in this place, for convenience' sake, be advisable in order to avoid digression from the narrative of the journey. We will, therefore, proceed in brief words to remind the reader of the geographical position and physical characteristics of that region, and set before him a short notice of its peoples, and the principal events of their past history.

The territory of the Khanate of Kashghar which, in the time of the Arab conquest, was known as Kichik Bukhara or "Little Bukhara," and in that of the Chaghtay rulers as Mugholistan or "Mughol-land," has been in modern times made familiar to European readers under the names of Eastern or Chinese Turkistan or "Turk-land." It comprehends the basin of the Tarim river in all its extent, and runs east and west between the parallel ranges of the Tianshan and Kuenlun mountains on the north and south respectively. On the west it is separated from the corresponding basin of the Oxus—the Khanate of Bukhara—by the range of the Bolor mountains and Pamir steppes, which, extending north and south, connect the other two mountain barriers. And on

the east, beyond Turfan on the north and Chachan on the south, it is limited by the Great Desert of Gobi

Within these boundaries the country presents a vast undulating plain of which the slope is very gradual towards the east, and of which the general elevation may be reckoned at from three to four thousand feet above the sea. The aspect of its surface is mostly one of unmitigated waste—a vast spread of bare sand and glaring salts, traversed in all directions by dunes and banks of gravel, with the scantiest vegetation, and all but absence of animal life. Such is the view that meets the eye and joins the horizon everywhere on the plain immediately beyond the river courses and the settlements planted on their banks.

The mountain ranges bounding three sides of the territory are amongst the loftiest in the world, and their highest recesses are filled by glacier masses of greater or less magnitude. These last, on the north and south, are the feeders of the principal rivers of the country; and in the summer season cause their swelled streams to overflow the low banks of the sandy channels in which they run. The rivers all issue from these mountain barriers at intervals on the three sides of the enclosed area, and, following a more or less easterly course, converge towards the mid plain. And at different spots on its surface they coalesce to form the Tarim river, which becomes lost in a wide stretch of swamps and lagoons known by the name of Lob, and described as covering an area of from three to four months' journey in circuit. Little is known of this vast tract more than that it is the nest of a wild race of outcast people who shun the society of their fellowmen, and contest the shelter of the forests and reed belts with their more natural denizens—the wild hog, panther, tiger, and wolf. Beyond the lagoons is an unexplored

waste of blindingly bright salts, untraversable to all but the wild camel, which, in its solitudes and freedom, breeds and lives and dies a stranger to the toils and slavery of his domesticated brother.

Owing to the nature of the country, and the sterility of its soil, the population is massed at isolated intervals bordering the mountain skirts along the banks of the several rivers where they issue upon the plain. They thus form separate settlements or states, separated each from the other by a greater or less expanse of blank desert, which is composed mostly of sand and gravel, with a varying proportion of salines.

Cut off from each other as their several settlements thus are, they form within themselves, for the purposes of support, government, and defence, independent little societies, which are confederated within the general area of the country into one or more leagues or factions, according as the political interests of the several communities are influenced by the vicissitudes of the times, and the disturbing effects of changing dynasties. Each of these separate states or settlements has a central fortified capital, around which spread the suburbs, and beyond these again the rural districts and townships, according to the facilities for irrigation and cultivation.

There are altogether thirteen such isolated settlements within the Kashghar territory, exclusive of the highland district of Wakhan and Sarighcul—the Sarikol of the maps—whose Aryan population are of a different stock and language to the Turk and Tartar of the rest of the territory; and they contain the whole of the settled population of the country. Of these, Yarkand is by far the largest and most populous settlement. It was the seat of government under the Chinese who, for revenue purposes, reckoned its population at 32,000 houses, of

which about a fourth were allotted to the city and suburbs.

Under the present *régime* these settlements may be considered as reduced to seven provincial governments, each administered by a *Dadkhwah*, or "magistrate," who is under the direct orders of the Khan alone.

They are, in the order of their succession from the south round to the north and east, Khutan including Chachan, Yarkand, Kashghar with Yangi Hissar and Maralbashi, Acsu and Uch Turfan, Kucha, Kurla, Carashahar including Lob, and Turfan or Kuhna Turfan, "Old Turfan," as it is called, to distinguish it from the little agricultural settlement of the same name adjoining Acsu.

In general appearance these settlements wear a look of great prosperity and plenty. They are veritable oases in a dreary and arid desert, and produce within their several areas all the requisites for the independent support, so far as food and clothing are concerned, of their normal populations; but they are incapable of sustaining the strain of a largely increased demand.

Cultivation is entirely dependent on the water supply. And this, owing to the small calibre of the rivers, is limited in extent. What there is, however, is utilised to the best advantage, and spread over the cultivated tracts in numerous canals and irrigation cuts, whether fed from the rivers or from springs.

The rural population is settled along the courses of these streams in detached farmsteads, usually composed of a cluster of three or four tenements together, which are surrounded by their own fields, vineyards, orchards and plantations. These farmsteads radiate from the city suburbs in all directions quite to the verge of the cultivated tracts, where they end on the edge of the desert;

and in some localities they form an unbroken spread of trees, fields, and houses that stretch for a distance of from ten to fifteen miles along the course of the larger canals.

To the traveller approaching from the desert, in the spring season, the first appearance of one of these settlements conveys the idea of dense population and profuse abundance; but on entering within the charming area the reality soon discloses itself to his observation. He finds that the mass of tall foliage, so attractive by reason of its refreshing verdure, is very largely that of unproductive trees—except of fuel, timber, and shade—such as the willow, poplar, and elm; whilst the other most common trees, such as the mulberry, walnut, and elœagnus, are not so valuable a source of food—however useful in other respects—as the less obtrusive and more carefully tended apple, apricot, plum, and vine. He will find that the houses of the people are widely and sparsely scattered, and dot the surface at such intervals that scarcely fifty are within the range of sight all round, at a radius of from one to two miles. Between them, he will note that the patches of field and garden produce wheat, barley, maize, and rice, cotton, flax, and hemp, as well as tobacco, melons, lucerne, and pulse, and all the vegetables of an English kitchen garden.

The list is long, but the out-turn is not in proportion; for he will learn, on inquiry, that vegetation in this region only flourishes between April and October, and that the produce of six months has to feed the people for twelve, and that without the aid of external supplies. These circumstances, coupled with the extent and nature of the several settlements, perforce limit the population capable of being supported in each, and reduce the numbers very far below the figures heretofore received as representing the inhabitants of this territory.

During our stay in the country I made careful inquiry on this subject, and have come to the conclusion that the population of the territory of Kashghar, as before defined, including the nomade Kirghiz subjects of the Khan, and the hill tribes of Muztagh and Sarighcul, taken all together, is considerably less than a million and a half of souls. In fact, the whole region is as waste and uninhabited as it looks upon the map.

It is not, however, devoid of some natural productions of great value, and contains within itself a store of mineral treasures which might be made a source of very considerable wealth. It was the knowledge of this fact that induced the Chinese to cling so perseveringly to this distant and expensive frontier province of their empire. Under their rule the gold mines and jade quarries of Khutan, the copper mines of Khalistan, and the silver and lead mines of Cosharab, gave employment and support to thousands of families of Chinese emigrants and Tartar colonists. The coal of Acsu and Kuhna Turfan was, in their time, the common fuel of every household in those parts of the territory. The iron of Kizili furnished them a supply for the manufacture of domestic utensils; whilst the sulphur of Kalpin and the alum, sal ammoniac, and zinc of the volcanic region north of Acsu—the Khan Khura Tagh—afforded the materials for the prosecution of several industrial pursuits, and supplied the wants of the dyers, and tanners, and other such native industries.

The animal productions of the country were mostly obtained through the huntsmen of Lob, who bartered stags' horns, swans' down, otter skins, and other furs, including tiger and panther skins, for corn, cottons, tea, and cutlery. The wool of Turfan and the musk of Khutan were exported to Kashmir, the one for the manufacture of its peculiar shawls, the other for the drug

market of India. The sheep, horses, oxen, and camels met the wants of home use and consumption, and were bartered by the Kirghiz for silks, cottons, tea, and cutlery. The wild camel of the Lob desert, the tiger of the Maralbashi forests, and the *marál*, or "stag," of the same locality, the wild hog of the reed belts bordering the rivers, the gazelle of the desert, and the antelope of the mountains, the wild horse and wild sheep (ovis Poli) of the lower hills, and the wild *yák* or *cutás* (bos grunniens) of the snowy ranges were objects of the chase to the hunter in their several vicinities; whilst, similarly, the pheasant, partridge, and hare, with the sand grouse and wild duck on the plains, and the snow pheasant and francolin on the hills, afforded sport to the falconer and sportsman in these localities.

The silk and cotton—fibre and fabric—of Khutan and Turfan found markets in Khocand and the adjoining provinces of China respectively; whilst the hemp resin, or *bang*, of Yarkand formed the principal item of export in the direction of Kashmir and the Panjab. For the rest, the carpets and felts of Khutan, the boots and furs of Yarkand, and the saddlery and harness gear of Acsu, were exchanged between the several states of the territory for the more special of their productions, such as the cows and mules of Khutan, the walnuts and dried fruits of Yarkand, the linseed of Kashghar, the tobacco of Acsu, and sheep of Turfan, &c.

Such in main are the geographical features of the territory, and such the principal of its productions. Its climate is equally peculiar and varied. Its chief characteristics are the extremes of temperature in midsummer and midwinter, the general aridity of the atmosphere and rarity of rainfall, and the periodical winds and sand-storms that sweep its surface. Their intensity and

duration varies in different parts of the country, and their nature is further modified by the operation of local causes.

Thus, the temperature, which in the western districts falls to 26° Fah. below zero during winter, and rises in the sun's rays to 150° Fah. during summer, is described as of more equable and temperate character in those on the eastern borders of the country, where, as in Lob and Turfan, frosts are mild and of short duration, though the summer heats are more oppressive by reason of the steamy vapour raised by the sun's action upon the swamp tract which covers so wide a surface of the land in that direction.

The steady north-west wind, which blows down the valley in spring, is followed in the autumn by violent storms and whirlwinds, which reach their maximum intensity on the eastern half of the plain, and raise clouds of sand that fill the air with an impenetrable obscurity over hundreds of square miles of the country. Rain rarely falls on the plain, and only in thin showers during the summer season—a fortunate circumstance for the people, for a good downpour, such as we are accustomed to in India, would sap their mud walls and bring the houses down upon their devoted heads. Snow falls in winter for a few days only, to the aggregate depth of perhaps a foot, and only on the westernmost parts of the plain.

The wide range of atmospheric temperature in the course of succession of the seasons, combined with the effects of the other meteorological phenomena above referred to, are not without their special influence on the health standard of the people; though what the precise nature of this may be there are no sufficient data from which to draw a just conclusion.

During our sojourn in those cities, I opened a charitable dispensary in Yarkand and Kashghar, and, from the large numbers daily attending, was enabled to acquire a tolerably correct idea of the diseases most prevalent amongst the inhabitants, as well as to form an opinion as to the standard of their physical development and endurance as a people. The result of my experience tends to prove that, of the mass of disease and suffering I saw, less was attributable to the direct influence of climate than might have been expected; that more was the result of the operation of local agencies, and that most owed its origin to neglect of hygiene coupled with indulgence in vicious habits.

Under the first category, inflammatory affections of the respiratory organs and glands of the throat were common enough, as were rheumatic affections; but fevers were not so. And of these typhoids and remittents were more prevalent than intermittents, which last, indeed, were remarkably unfrequent. On the other hand, scrofula and pulmonary consumption, cancers and melanotic tumours, appeared with a frequency of recurrence attractive of attention; whilst diseases of the eye—its membranes and humours, and blindness—cataract and amaurosis, were met at every turn, the result of atmospheric and terrestrial influences combined.

These last with bronchocele, which, in every form and variety, are of almost universal prevalence in the city and suburbs of Yarkand more than elsewhere, are attributable to local agencies originating in the nature of the soil, and afflict the people to a hideous degree. The frequency of blindness is attributable to the intense glare from the snow-white salines that almost everywhere encrust the light sandy soil of the country; whilst the prevalence of goitre is assigned a cause in the quality of

the water supply which flows over a sandy soil very largely composed of mica.

Of the diseases produced by vicious habits and faulty mode of living, we need here only refer to those resulting from the very general abuse of opium and hemp, as, owing to their frequency and aggravated forms in both sexes, they form an important item in the sum total of the defects that combine to deteriorate the physical standard of the people. They are found in great variety, principally connected with derangement of the digestive functions, and may be classed under the comprehensive term *dyspepsia*—a disease which, in its aggravated forms, unfits the sufferer from the pursuit of his ordinary avocation, and too often develops itself into *hypochondriasis* and *mania*.

With the above result of my experience of the healthy state of the people in the two principal cities of the country, it would appear that climate is less at fault than society. On our own party, numbering 130 men, the effects of the climate, during a residence of six months in the western districts of the country, was only beneficial. But then, as honoured guests, we were surrounded with every comfort and convenience of protection, and the experiences of our mode of life during the most healthy season of the year, afford no criterion whereby to judge those of the resident population living under far less favourable conditions. The rigorous character and prolonged duration of the winter season in this region condemns the people to a life of inactivity during nearly half the year, whilst the powerful action of the sun—intensified by the arid and desert nature of the country—during the remaining portion of the period, operates to render them less capable of enduring physical exertion than the inhabitants of the more tem-

perate climes, and at the same time—under conditions that claim all the energies of the people for the production of the means of subsistence—hinder a free development of the mental faculties in the paths of science or literature, and prevent the cultivation of the arts of civilised life, such as architecture, painting, mechanical skill, and so forth, in any degree beyond that of their simplest and barbarous forms. Such is the conclusion to be drawn from what we saw of the country and its people. We found the latter for the most part suitably clad and well nourished—were they not so they could not exist in such a climate—but at the same time we observed that they were singularly deficient in the power of enduring any sustained physical exertion, particularly in the way of marching, even the poorest doing their journeys astride an ass. Their literature, with the exception of a few works dating from the flourishing epoch of the Chaghtay rule, is very meagre, and consists mostly of theological books introduced by the priesthood of Bukhara and Khocand. Their cities, with the exception of two or three decayed mosques of the Arab period, are devoid of buildings of any architectural merit, whilst the mud-built houses composing their towns and homesteads cannot for a moment compare with the picturesque edifices of an Indian city; for the substantial structure, elegant style, and convenient design of the latter are altogether unknown in Kashghar—alike in the palaces of the kings or mansions of the nobles, which differ but little, except in size and interior comfort and decoration, from the humble flat-roofed mud-built tenements of the general community.

The country has no manufactures, and produces no works of art of any excellence, or of such quality that it could barter with its neighbours for more requisite com-

modities. The silk fabrics of Khutan are far inferior to those of Khocand, and find no demand beyond the limits of their own territory; whilst its coarse cottons and felts are sought only for the home market of Khocand. And similarly the boots of Yarkand and the saddles of Acsu go abroad no further than Kirghiz camps on the borders of the country. The wool of Turfan—the finest in the world—supports no home manufacture of any excelling merit, though in the hands of the Kashmiri it produces the shawls of which the celebrity is world wide. The highly prized jade, so greatly in demand amongst the Chinese, was only wrought in the country by the skill of emigrants—artists from the interior of the empire. It is on its raw materials and natural products that the country depends for its external trade, and not on its manufactures or products of skilled industry. Its gold and silk, its musk and jade, its *bang* and its wool, are all that the country can give for the tea, sugar, spices and drugs of which it stands in need; for the cottons and muslins, the silks and satins, the velvets and brocades of which the wealthy are the purchasers; and for the furs, cutlery, and hardware which are required by every household. But for the development of these natural sources of wealth the country wants a secure and just government and a far more enlightened administration than is to be hoped for from a Muhammadan ruler such as are the ignorant despots of the petty states of Central Asia—those sinks of barbarism, iniquity, fanaticism and oppression that form the crumbling barrier between the civilised and Christian governments of Great Britain and Russia. The above facts, cited as illustrative of the deficient energy of the people now inhabiting the territory of Kashghar, are not to be considered as mainly the result of the climate in which they

live, though no doubt its effects are not without a certain influence, which, in combination with the other conditions of their position and government, has operated to produce the state of affairs described.

It is the nature of the society and the character of the rule which obtain amongst them, acting upon the peculiar innervation of the stock from whence they are derived, that have been the principal agents in moulding the character of the people to the fashion in which we find it.

We are taught by the records of history that the region now occupied by the people of Kashghar was in remote times the seat of a race whose posterity have peopled far distant and wide-spreading continents, and have risen to the foremost rank in science and civilisation, in industry and enterprise, in power and wealth. From the vast plains between the Himalaya and the Altai, and from the recesses of the mountain chain passing diagonally between them, issued the forefathers of the Saxon race in Europe, and their Aryan kindred in India. But their pristine home knows them no longer, only a few insignificant tribes (as to number) of the prime stock now remaining in the inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains from which they have been assigned a distinctive race designation.

It is on the slopes of the Hindu Kush—the real Caucasus—that we find the pure Caucasian, the representatives of the original Saka, Sui or Sacœ, who were pushed up from the plains by kindred tribes of the Yuchi, Getœ, Jatta, or Goth, as they themselves were pressed by vast hordes of a foreign and barbarous stock issuing from the extreme north.

Successive irruptions of these northern barbarians drove the Saka and the Jatta, or the Sui and Yuchi, as

the Chinese call them respectively, out of their primeval seats, and impelled them upon Europe in the one direction, and upon India in the other.

In the west they have transplanted to the soil of their adoption—as in Gothland, Jutland, England, Saxony, &c.—the names of their colonising tribes; and in the south they have repeated the names of the settlements they left behind them, as Kasi or Banaras (Kasighar-Kashghar), Hari or Harat (Arikhand-Yarkand), Kucha or Kuchar (Kachar-Cachar), Kurla (Koela), Katak—now in ruins—(Cuttack). At least, so I venture to conclude from the similarity of names, and the historical record of the emigration. Further, the northern highlands of Kashghar are still known as Jatta Mughol—the names of its former and present inhabitants combined—though in the time of Tymur (Tamerlane) the country was called simply Jatta, notwithstanding the fact of its inhabitants being the Mughol; and it is probable that the Jatta or Jat, or Jath of the Panjab, who have been identified with the Yuchi, originally dwelt in this locality bearing their name.

The Yuchi were dispossessed of Kashghar, and driven into Kabul and Kashmir, by a tribe of Mughol Tartar pressing forward from the direction of Khamil and Turfan. Their tribal name was Uyghur, but they were called Hiungnu or Hioungnou by the Chinese, and made themselves known in Europe—where they are represented by the Hungarians of the present-day—as the Ouighour, Ougre, or Hunigur, Hongre or Hun. These Uyghur are the present inhabitants of Kashghar, but they have lost much of the distinguishing race type of their original stock through Caucasian innervation introduced with the Arab conquest; and the result of the commixture has been, apart from the change of

physiognomy and growth of beard, an improved standard of physical development and mental capacity.

They share the territory with the Calmac and Kirghiz, who are Tartars of a strongly-marked Mughol or Mongol type, and roam the northern and eastern borders of the territory. The Calmac are Budhists, and the Kirghiz nominally profess Islam, though in reality they are, as the Musalmans style them, mere pagans. Both the tribes have little intercourse with the settled Muhammadan population on the side of Kashghar, whilst on the other—to the north of Tianshan—where they are in force, they are mostly Russian subjects.

The Uyghur, after expelling the Yuchi—about two hundred years before the Christian era—established an independent kingdom in Kashghar, and waged a succession of wars against China, which ended by their subjection to that empire about 60 B.C. They subsequently, however, recovered their independence, but were again attacked by the Chinese who annexed the country to the empire, and in 94 A.D. occupied Kashghar. From this they crossed the mountains into the Oxus valley, and carried their arms as far west as the shores of the Caspian.

From this period up to the time of the Arab conquest of the Bukhara territory, or Transoxiana, in the early part of the eighth century, Kashghar acknowledged a more or less vicarious allegiance to the Chinese government. So long as the government was strong at the capital, and order reigned in the home provinces, Kashghar remained loyal, and a willing tributary governed by officers appointed from the imperial palace. In times of civil commotion and dismemberment in the interior of the empire, on the contrary, this territory threw off its allegiance, and became divided into a

number of petty states under independent local chiefs, each at war with the other for mastery over the whole.

And such was the divided state of the country at the time that the Arabs appeared on the banks of the Oxus in the beginning of the eighth century. These impetuous conquerors here received a check in the victorious career of their triumphs, and it was not till after a succession of campaigns that they planted their creed and rule on the soil of Bukhara. Yet, even in the first of their onslaughts against this devoted territory, so great was the zeal of their warriors, and so ambitious the enterprise of their generals, that Cutaiba, in 712 A.D., penetrated into Khocand, and, crossing the mountains, carried a rapid expedition through the length of Kashghar up to Turfan on the proper China frontier.

The death of the Khalif Walid, however, necessitated his hasty retreat from so distant a position, and Kashghar enjoined a temporary reprieve. Meanwhile, the Arabs consolidated their conquest on the west of the passes, and stamping out with impartial ferocity alike the worship of the Magi and the religion of the Christian, brought the whole country under the protection of Islam.

Their inexorable law—the Curan or the sword—was explicit, and left no middle course. Accept the one, and claim the rights of equality, brotherhood, and protection; reject it, and submit to the decree of God and the edge of the sword were the only alternatives. The Curan triumphed, and found so congenial a soil that its doctrine soon struck root, and flourished with a prosperity which rivalled that of the faith in the cradle of its origin, and in after times, up to our own days, formed a centre of its most fanatic bigotry and exclusive jealousy.

The most important of the early converts was Saman,

a Zoroastrian noble of Balkh, who embraced Islam in order to regain possession of the hereditary estates from which, under the new *régime*, he had been ejected. Whatever his own convictions might have been, his posterity were sincere followers of the prophet, for we find the four sons of his son Asad holding posts of honour and trust, as governors of the four most important provinces of the country—Herat, Samarcand, Farghana and Tashkand—under the special patronage of the Khalif.

Nasar, the son of Ahmad, and governor of Farghana during the revolt of the Sistan princes, became ruler of all Bukhara and Turkistan, and established the Samani dynasty. His brother and successor, Ismail, raised the Samani power to its highest point, and at his death, in 907 A.D., left an empire extending from Ispahan and Shiraz on the west to Turfan and the Gobi on the east, and from Sistan and the Persian Gulf on the south to the Capchac Steppes and Great Desert on the north.

It was during the Samani rule that Islam was first introduced amongst the Uyghur of Kashghar. Here, as in the Oxus valley, it met a determined opposition, and, notwithstanding the conversion of Satoc Bughra Khan, the hereditary chief of Kashghar, and his zeal in the cause of its propagation, the doctrine and law was not enforced in the country until Khutan—the ancient stronghold of Budhism—was finally subjugated. This was after a warfare of nearly twenty-five years, during which the flower of Persian chivalry withered on an unknown waste, and a host of Arab martyrs sanctified the soil with their blood, and earned for themselves a lasting memorial in the endless calendar of Muhammadan saints.

On the decline of the Samani dynasty after a rule of nearly a hundred and fifty years—during which the Per-

sian literature suppressed by the Arabs was revived, and the religion planted by them was established according to the orthodox *Sunni* ordinance in triumph over the *Shiá* heresy propagated by the false prophet Muccann'a—the Bughra Khan family, whose ruling chief was called Iylik Khan and had his capital at Kashghar, rose to power, and the Uyghur Empire spread over the vallies on both sides of the Bolor range—from the Caspian to the Gobi.

Iylik Khan was dispossessed of his western conquests by the Saljuk Tatar under Sultan Sanjar; and dissensions breaking out in the Bughra Khan family, the Uyghur, divided amongst themselves, soon succumbed to the Cara Khitay, a Mughol or Mongol horde, who were advancing from the direction of Ila in the early part of the twelfth century. Gorkhan or "Sovereign Lord"—the title of the leader of this wandering horde of Chinese outcasts—profiting by the asylum granted to his Budhist following on the Uyghur borders, took advantage of their internal dissensions to seize the country for himself, and very quickly extended his conquests up to Khiva. The Cara Khitay rule, after enduring for eighty-five years, was suddenly overthrown by the treachery of Koshluk Khan, who plotted with Cutubuddin Muhammad Khwarizm Shah for the division of the Gorkhan Empire between them.

This Koshluk was prince of the Nayman Kirghiz—a tribe which, like some others of those wandering shepherds, professed Christianity as members of the Nestorian Church—and fled from his home in Caracoram before the hostility of Changiz, who was pressing forward his Mughols from the north-east, to seek asylum with the Gorkhan of kindred race and country. He met a cordial reception from the Cara Khitay leader,

and received his daughter in marriage, but repaid these favours by the basest ingratitude; and when the Khwarizm king, flushed by his recent successes against Khurasan and Bukhara, refused the tribute heretofore paid by Khiva, and Gorkhan in his old age personally took the field against him, Koshluk made a diversion in favour of Cutubuddin Muhammad, and brought defeat on the army of his patron, and following the rout of his troops, made a prisoner of his father-in-law, and usurped the reins of government.

He did not, however, long retain his ill-gotten power, and soon paid the penalty of his perfidy with his life. For Changiz, who had at this time mastered the tribes on the eastern and northern borders of Kashghar, now claimed the submission of the Uyghur. The northern division, under Aidy Cut, at once joined his victorious standard; but Koshluk, ruling the southern division, mindful of their former enmity, refused to do so. Changiz sent a division of his Mughol under two generals to reduce the refractory leader and annex his country. Koshluk now deserted by the Uyghur fled precipitately to Khutan, whilst the Mughol surprising his Nayman troops left at Kashghar, put them all to the sword, and went in pursuit of the fugitive. Koshluk, on their approach, abandoned his family and treasures, and with only two or three attendants, fled to the recesses of the mountains in Wakhan. Here he was seized by some shepherds of the country, who handed up his head to propitiate the Mughol pursuers.

And thus Kashghar, about 1220 A.D., passed into the hands of Changiz. Its territory suffered little of those horrors and destructions which mark to the present day the onward progress of this renowned conqueror, for the Uyghur now bodily joined his standard to work the

havoc they parried from their own country by this happy allegiance. Under the magnificence, protection, and toleration of the Mughol rule, Kashghar enjoyed a degree of prosperity she had never before known; and her cities, being on the line of route of the great trade caravans between China and Europe, soon rose to a position of wealth and importance.

The Christian, too, equally with the Budhist, both of whom under the ascendancy of Islam had been persecuted and proscribed, now reappeared in the country, and dwelt on equal terms with their former oppressors. The Muhammadan priest, now deprived of his power of appeal to the sword, rapidly lost the supremacy he had by violence held over the minds of the people, and Christian churches and Budhist temples sprung up where mosques fell to decay. That Christianity here had at this period acquired some considerable footing, may be concluded from the fact of Yarkand being a bishop's see at the time Marco Polo visited the country in the middle of the thirteenth century.

On the death of Changiz, his vast empire was divided between his sons, and the Kashghar territory formed part of the kingdom assigned to Chaghtay. But on his death, which occurred a few years later, the kingdom fell to pieces, and Kashghar became the bone of contention between rival princes of the Chaghtay line and that of his brother Aoktay, the *Khacan* of China, and passed in whole or in part alternately from one to the other till, finally, about the middle of the fourteenth century, it was brought together as an independent kingdom under Toghluc Tymur of Chaghtay descent, who moved his capital from Acsu to Kashghar; and had his summer quarters on the borders of the lake Isigh Kol on the

north of the Tianshan, in the territory called Mugholistan, or Jatta Mughol, or Ulus Jatta.

Toghluc Tymur restored peace and order in the country, appointed his court after the model of the Mughol Empire, and re-established Islam which, since the downfall of the Mughol Empire, had become the dominant creed in these regions. Towards the close of his reign, taking advantage of the troubles distracting that country, he invaded Bukhara, and left his son Ilyas Khoja in the government of Samarcand. But a few years later, on the death of Toghluc Tymur in 1363 A.D., he was driven out of the country by the Amirs Husen and Tymur (afterwards Tamerlane), and on reaching Mugholistan was killed by Camaruddin Doghlat, his father's governor of the province, who then seized all Kashghar, and killed all the children of Toghluc Tymur except an infant son—Khizr Khoja—who was carried away and secreted in the hills about Sarighcul and Khutan by Amir Khudadad, the governor of Kashghar. Amir Tymur, on becoming master of Bukhara, carried four successive expeditions into Mugholistan against Camaruddin and the Jatta. In the last of these Camaruddin was killed, and then, in 1383 A.D., Khizr Khoja was recalled from his exile and set on the throne at Kashghar by the governor—Amir Khudadad, son of Bolaji and nephew of Camaruddin. He was unable to restrain his nomads from their wonted raids upon the Tashkand frontier, and consequently Tymur, in 1389 A.D., undertook his fifth and last campaign against the country with a vast army, which, advancing in four divisions—two on the south and two on the north of Tianshan—swept the whole country and reunited in the Yuldoz valley, driving half the population, together with their spoil of captives and cattle and plunder, before them.

Tymur here divided the immense booty in slaves, cattle, and merchandise amongst his victorious troops, and then restoring Khizr Khoja, whose allegiance he accepted, and whose daughter he married, to the government, returned to his capital, leaving the country so beggared and depopulated that it has never recovered the shock. After Khizr Khoja the government descended through a succession of Mughol Khans, his descendants, whose reigns are characterised by an endless variety of disorders, strifes, and bloodshed—more or less connected with the state of affairs in Bukhara, and the Uzbak ascendancy in Khocand and northern Turkistan—till, after a duration of two hundred years, the power passed into the hands of the Khojas.

These proved no better rulers than those from whom they usurped the government, and the country knew no peace until it passed under the rule of the Chinese.

Khizr Khoja was succeeded in the rule of the Mughol by his son Muhammad Khan, who was the cotemporary of Ulugh Beg in Mawaranahar, and of Shahrukh in Khurasan, and was the last of the Khacan or "Emperors" who governed with the style and pomp of the Chaghtay court. He was a wealthy prince and a bigoted Musalman. During his reign the Muhammadan *shara'* was firmly established as the law of the land, and the country enjoyed a season of peace and prosperity.

During the succeeding reign of his son Sher Muhammad Khan, however, the country was plunged into disorder by the rebellion of Wais Khan, the son of his brother Sher 'Ali Oghlan who, collecting a lawless band of Kirghiz and Cazzac, raided the country in all directions and carried his incursions across the border into the territories of Tashkand and Khocand. In the midst of these disorders Sher Muhammad Khan died, and was

succeeded on the throne by his nephew, the rebellious Wais Khan. He was now powerless to restrain the unruly bands of adventurers he had gathered together about him, and his own inclinations drawing him to the excitements of the camp, he abandoned the cares of the government to prosecute a succession of fruitless campaigns for the conversion of the Calmac.

Amir Khudadad, the hereditary governor of Kashghar—who had rescued the infant Khizr Khoja from the clutches of his uncle Camaruddin and thus preserved the family from extinction, and who for three quarters of a century had served the Mughol Khans with loyal devotion, and endeared himself to the people by his probity and just government—now in his old age, hopeless of restoring order in the country, determined to abandon it. He invited Ulugh Beg to Chui, and there making over the Mughol to him, left the country to close his eventful life in the hallowed and peaceful precincts of the Prophet's shrine.

The Mughol, averse to so summary a transfer, dispersed to their steppes, and Ulugh sent an army to reduce them. Wais was killed in action on the banks of the Chui, and Kashghar was occupied by the troops from Samarcand. The succession was now contested between his two youthful sons, Yunus and Eshanbogha. The partizans of the former took him to Ulugh with the object of securing his support, but he sent the wild young Mughol out of the way to his father Shahrukh at Herat; and he put him in charge of the celebrated Maulana Sharifuddin 'Ali Yazdi to be educated and polished.

Meanwhile Eshanbogha, who was a mere puppet in the hands of the Mughol chiefs, themselves divided by jealousy and discord, was finally set on the throne at Acsu by Mir Sayyid 'Ali, who had recovered his hereditary govern-

ment of Kashghar from the nominees of Ulugh, after an estrangement of fourteen years. He was obliged, however, to abandon Acsu for the more secure retreat of his steppes, and here varied the monotony of his life by a succession of raids on Syram and Tashkand, and an invasion of Khocand or Andijan. These hostilities induced Abu Sa'íd, the successor of Ulugh Beg, to summon Yunus from his retreat in Shiraz, and to restore him to the government of the Mughol. His polished education in Persia, however, quite unfitted him to cope with the rough barbarity of his nomads, from whom he had become estranged by an absence of twenty-four years, and his first essay to recover the rule proved a disastrous failure. With the aid of his patron, however, and matrimonial alliances with his successor at Bukhara, and with the ruler of Khocand, he ultimately succeeded in establishing an insecure government at Tashkand, and a doubtful authority over Kashghar which had become divided between Eshanbogha in the east and Mir Sayyid 'Ali in the west, and their children respectively. On the death of Yunus the Uzbak power, which had been rapidly progressing under Shaiban Khan during his reign, acquired a complete mastery all over the states of Bukhara and Khocand. Tashkand soon fell to them, and Mahmúd, the son and successor of Yunus, was driven back upon his steppes; but unable to control the discords and contentions amongst the Mughol, he left their camps and repaired for asylum to Tashkand, and was there, with all his family, executed by the Uzbak chief. His brother Ahmad Khan, surnamed *Alaja* "the slayer," during the life of Yunus, had retired to rule over his steppes, and, after subduing his enemies amongst the nomads with a severity and recklessness of life which gained him the name by which he is known in history,

contested the possession of Kashghar against Ababakar, a grandson of Mir Sayyid 'Ali, who had seized the western half of the territory, and fixed his capital at Yarkand. He captured the cities of Kashghar and Yangi Hissar, and laid siege to Yarkand, but was ultimately driven back to his steppes by Ababakar.

It was on his return from this campaign that, hearing of the fate of Mahmúd, he went to avenge his death. He was, however, repulsed with loss, and retiring to Acsu died there in the winter following. His numerous sons now contested the rule of the Mughol amongst themselves and Ababakar. After several years of civil war, Mansur secured the eastern government up to Acsu, whilst his brother Sultan Sa'íd who, after a variety of adventures, had found refuge at Kabul, returned thence as a partizan of Babur, and seized the western half of the territory from Ababakar; and thus the two brothers enjoyed a divided government over the states of Kashghar.

Sultan Sa'íd was the last of the Mughol Khans who exercised any real authority in the country. He subdued the nomad camps on the northern borders, and secured the conquests made by Ababakar in the direction of Badakhshan and Kashmir. In 1531-2 A.D. he invaded Tibat with an army of 5000 men, but becoming very ill in the passage of the mountains, and finding the country incapable of supporting his troops during the winter, he seized upon Balti with a thousand men, and sent the rest under his son Iskandar to winter in Kashmir.

In the following summer he was rejoined by these troops, and sending them forward to the conquest of Lhassa, or Aorsang, himself set out to return to his capital. He died in the passage of the mountains, not far from the Caracoram pass, from the effects of the rarified atmos-

phere. His eldest son, Rashid, now set out from his government at Acsu and seized the capital. He executed and banished all his father's faithful servants, and dispersed his family, and allied with the Uzbaks. On the death of Mansur, he brought all the country up to Turfan under one united government, but on his death, owing to dissensions amongst his sons, the several states fell asunder under different members of the family, all more or less at feud with each other.

In this state of disorder and weakness Khoja Hidayatulla, surnamed Hazrat Afac, the head of a family of priests, descendants of the celebrated Makhdúmi ul'azim of Bukhara, who had only in recent years acquired a position at Kashghar, usurped the government amidst a perfect maze of intrigues, plots, and contentions. Being ousted by a combination of his opponents, the Khoja—about the middle of the seventeenth century—called to his aid the Calmac ruler of Ila or Zunghar; but he seized the country for himself, merely reinstating the Khoja for the purpose of administering the government under officers appointed by himself.

This, however, did not restore peace to the country, and on the death of Afac a fresh war broke out amongst the Khojas, his sons and successors, for the mastery; and it continued, under varying phases, for more than a century, when the anarchy in Zunghar led to the occupation of Ila by the Chinese, and their subsequent conquest of Kashghar—as successors of the Calmac possessors—about 1760 A.D.

The Chinese, on taking possession of the country, in no way interfered with the internal administration of the government, which was carried on as heretofore by Musalman agents, supervised by Chinese officers who were all under the control of a provincial governor ap-

pointed from Pekin; but they planted a strong garrison in the capital of each of the states, and held other strategic points and frontier posts for the defence of the country, maintenance of order, protection of trade, and the realisation of the revenue.

The advance of the Chinese so far to the west alarmed all the petty states of Central Asia, and the priesthood, stimulated by the appeals of the expatriated Khojas, who had found an asylum in Khocand, called upon the princes and people to unite under the green banner of Islam to repel the infidel foe. But then, as now, the anarchy, rivalries, and jealousies dividing the several independent governments of that seat of Muhammadan bigotry and ignorance prevented any coalition or unity of action, though the self-made monarch of the newly raised Afghan kingdom, in the arrogance of his sudden rise to power, sent a force to protect the frontier at Tashkand, whilst his envoys went to Pekin with a haughty demand for the restoration of Kashghar to its Musalman rulers.

His embassy met with no further mishap than a summary dismissal, and Ahmad Shah was content to avenge himself by overruning Badakhshan and leaving Islam in Kashghar to take care of itself, whilst he more profitably employed his arms in the Panjab. The dispossessed Khojas, however, never ceased to agitate their claims, and seized every promising opportunity to invade the country and attempt the recovery of their patrimonial rights.

In these endeavours they were encouraged, to persevere, by the facilities afforded for intrigue through the intimate relations permitted to subsist under the Chinese rule between the western states of Kashghar and the Khanate of Khocand, by reason of the trade

privileges granted by the Pekin Government in favour of the Khan of Khocand, whose territory, *paripassu* with the establishment of the Chinese rule in Kashghar, had grown into an independent principality.

No less than four times during the present century did the Khojas invade Kashghar from Khocand and raise the three western states of Khutan, Yarkand, and Kashghar in revolt against the Chinese authority. In each instance were they welcomed with acclamations of joy as deliverers from the infidel yoke, and in each instance, after only a few brief weeks of authority, were they loathed as shameless libertines, and execrated as merciless tyrants. In each instance they fled before the Chinese reinforcements without a party to stand by them in the hour of need, or to follow them in their turn of misfortune. And in each instance was the restoration of the infidel rule, despite its accompanying reprisals, executions, and tortures, hailed with satisfaction as the lesser of the two evils; for in its train came protection, law, trade, and prosperity, neither one or other of which was known under the riot and plunder of the Khoja bands of needy adventurers.

Yet notwithstanding these experiences, so strong is the inherent fanaticism of Islamite bigotry, however lax may be the observance of its ordinances, that there is little doubt had another invasion under the former conditions occurred, it would have run a similar course to its predecessors. And this opinion is supported by the facts of the successful career of the present ruler of the territory,—a career prosecuted under circumstances so different from those attending previous invasions from the same principality of Khocand.

The last revolt in Kashghar, inaugurated from the side of Khocand, was that under Khoja Wali Khan in 1857.

At this time a new power had established itself upon the borders, and with the appearance of the Russians on the Jaxartes and on the shores of Isigh Kol, the influence of the Khan of Khocand on the one side, and of the Chinese in Kashghar on the other, relatively and substantively underwent a change more or less in subservience to the ambition of their more powerful neighbour; and both alike, though from the action of different causes, before long became distracted by anarchy and revolt, much to the advantage of their mutual enemy hovering upon their borders.

During the intestine feuds and disorders at this period convulsing the principality of Khocand, the Russians, through the exigency of the position in which they found themselves, were forced to advance and annex the most important part of the territory. Following this, the revolt in Kashghar, surging on from the Chinese provinces to the East, necessitated their interference and assumption of authority over Zunghar; and this at a moment far from convenient to themselves, with the progress of the annexation of the country down to Samarcand still upon their hands.

It was whilst the Russians were thus occupied that Khoja Buzurg Khan, doubtless much to their satisfaction, quitted the trenches of Tashkand with the permission of Alim Culi, and with his small band of adventurers under Baturbashi Yacub Beg set out from Khocand to recover the rule of his ancestors over the divided states of Kashghar, now completely severed from their connection with the Chinese Empire by the insurrection of the Tungani.

It is not necessary here to trace in detail the brief and inglorious career of the Khoja, nor that of his more successful general, Yacub Beg, in the conquest of Kash-

ghar. Suffice it for our purpose to say that the latter, after deposing his master, was indebted for his success to the aid of the Andijan or Khocand emigrants and merchants he found in the country, as well as, like all Muhammadan usurpers under similar conditions of education and circumstances, to the free use of the irresponsible despot's privileges, exercised solely for the advancement of his personal interest.

Consequently, we find that the history of the six years during which he gradually brought into his sole and undisputed possession the six principal states of the territory—Turfan, Kucha, Acsu, Kashghar, Yarkand, and Khutan, each of which has a melancholy record of its own wrongs and sufferings—is a fearful picture of the miseries and ruin worked upon the country in the process of reconverting it into a Muhammadan government on the model of the intolerant and fanatic courts of the, let us hope, happily doomed Bukhara and Khocand.

The events of this period, as we were in a measure enabled to ascertain during our stay in the country, differed little in point of reality from the accounts which, from time to time, floated about the frontier bazars of the Panjab, and now and again received a fresh interest from the exciting details brought down by the traders returning from the north, though, strange to say, they at the time hardly attracted the notice of the Indian press in any degree commensurate with their importance.

Yet, during this eventful time were enacted in the states of Kashghar a succession of mean intrigues and base treacheries, a role of wholesale assassinations and summary imprisonments, and a course of confiscations, executions, and tortures, the detail of which is horrifying, though by itself incomplete without the addition of the tyranny of Islam—its merciless massacres and

forcible conversions, its intolerance of the unbeliever and destruction of every trace of his religion, its lawful plunder of his property and its equally legal enslavement of his person and his family.

Through an ordeal, such as is portrayed above, did the states of Kashghar pass before Yacub Beg, as *Atalik Ghazi* or "Champion of the Faith," established his authority over the country, and revived its decayed Islam on the model of the orthodox *Sunni* doctrine by the strict enforcement of the *Shara'* and the restoration of Muhammadan relics all over the country.

In this course the ruling families of the newly established principalities of Khutan and Acsu *cum* Kucha were cleared away root and branch. The aged chief of Orumchi, who, on the destruction of the Acsu family, temporarily became prince of Turfan as an integral portion of his dominion, passed away during the storm which, presently following its capture by Yacub Beg, swept over his capital, and left his populous and flourishing territory a depopulated and beggared waste; whilst of the Tungani leaders and governors in these eastern towns not one survived the transfer of the rule.

With the establishment of the new *régime*, however, and the disappearance of all supposed to be in any way capable of obstructing its endurance, the country has become consolidated under a single ruler whose aim is to assimilate the whole to one uniform standard under the banner of Islam. With the conflicting element of the Budhist Calmac who preponderate, or did so, on the borders of the Eastern States as pagan tributaries paying the *jaziya*, and the large number of enslaved captives of war, and forced converts—both Chinese and Calmac—mixed up with the Muhammadan population generally throughout the country, the task is of itself one of no

small difficulty, without considering the nature of the material on which the ruler has to rely for the maintenance of his authority in the country of his conquest. Let us hope, in the interests of philanthropy and civilisation, that the conquering chief—now that he has the field clear to himself—may prove himself worthy of the charge he has assumed; and that the intercourse he has for other purposes initiated with the governments of Europe most powerful in Asia, may in due time be the means of introducing an enlightened, just, and tolerant government into a region where their fruits promise a more abundant harvest than in any other part of the Central Asian area.

With this necessarily very brief and summary review of the country and its people, we may now proceed with the narrative of the journey of the Embassy to Kashghar in 1873-4.

CHAPTER I.

In the first days of the year 1873 there arrived in Kashmir, after a hazardous passage of the mountains, a party of eight or ten Andijan or Khocand horsemen headed by one who, in the summer of 1870, had made the journey northward from Srinaggar in company with Mr Forsyth's Mission to Yarkand in that year. Their appearance at so late a period of the season was unexpected, but, the nature of their errand being explained, they were welcomed and expedited on their way by the officials of the Maharaja.

Sayyid Yacub Khan, *Torah*, the Envoy of Atalik Ghazi to the Viceroy of India and the Sultan of Turkey, in the first instance repaired to the camp of the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab, which was at that time pitched at Hasanabdal during the manœuvres of an army of exercise assembled in that locality, and presenting himself before Sir Henry Davies made known the purpose of his visit.

After a brief rest there, during which he enjoyed a hearty hospitality and witnessed a military spectacle such as, in point of magnificence and splendour, and I may add efficiency, is not to be seen out of India, he proceeded to Calcutta; and having satisfactorily adjusted his business with the Government of India there, he set out on his mission to Constantinople.

In the interval of his absence was organised the Embassy to Kashghar for the purpose of concluding a

treaty of commerce with that state, a treaty for which Atalik Ghazi, through his envoy, had expressed his earnest desire as a means of improving the friendly relations which had recently sprung up between the two governments.

Mr T. D. Forsyth, C.B. (now Sir Douglas Forsyth, K.C.S.I.), whose identification from the first with the measures exerted for the development of our trade with Yarkand at once pointed him out as above all others the most fitted, by his intimate knowledge of the country and people, for the conduct of such an enterprise, was selected for this important duty, and appointed on the part of the Viceroy of India his Envoy and Plenipotentiary for the purpose stated.

With him was associated an efficient staff of scientific and military officers to profit by the occasion thus offered of increasing our meagre information regarding those most interesting and almost unknown countries which lie immediately to the north of the Himalaya, and which it was hoped the embassy would visit before returning to India; for the programme of its march included a visit to Khutan and Acsu, and a journey through Badakhshan and Balkh to Kabul.

The enterprise attracted no small amount of attention at the time, and awakened an interest hardly less sustained in England than in India itself; whilst, with less of publicity, it claimed the more close scrutiny of other countries more directly affected by the scope of its operations.

The press in India was full of the movement, and viewed the subject under various aspects of its bearing. And even before the departure of the embassy discussed its objects—whether commercial, scientific, or political—with as little of discretion as of propriety, and questioned

the individual merits of its several members with more of candour than of compliment. The dangers that were ahead of us, the troubles that would beset our course, and the horrible fate that was to cut short the triumph of our labours were vividly portrayed by a very well informed writer in the *Pioneer*, and reached us in time only to add a zest to the spirit of the enterprise.

With due deference to the general accuracy of the writer above referred to, I may here note, in reference to his moral warnings and doleful forebodings, that if, in the following pages, I am silent in regard to those dangerous ordeals prognosticated by him, the reader may certainly conclude that we benedicts had no cause to fear the prophesied assaults against the sanctity of our hymeneal vows, whilst as to the bachelors of our party —they can speak for themselves. Of the perils foretold by him from the capricious temper and uncontrolled violence of Atalik Ghazi we fortunately had no experience—not a single member of our party lost his head to satisfy the whim of a despot's wrath, neither did any one of us find lodging in a Russian prison!

What our real experiences were the narrative will in due course unfold. Meanwhile let us return to the arrangements for our journey.

Much preparation and careful attention to details were necessary for the proper equipment of the party on a scale commensurate with the requirements of the expedition, and in a style befitting the importance of the occasion.

To be independent in our movements, and have the means of transport under our own control, it was decided to purchase a baggage train of a hundred mules for the express use of the embassy. The gear of these as well as the mule trunks were all made in the government manufactory at Kanhpur, or more familiarly

Cawnpore, and were turned out in the best style of workmanship and of the most improved pattern. The packsaddles were of the New Zealand pattern, and adapted to riding or loading according to necessity, and the mule trunks were of sheet leather, sewn with copper wire, and looked very much more serviceable than they proved under the test of experience.

The tents were made to order at the manufactory of the Lahore Central Jail, on a pattern devised by Mr Forsyth, and, despite the many poles (three upright poles of two pieces each, and two folding ridge poles), and sockets and ropes, proved roomy and comfortable, and an efficient protection against the weather. They were something in the style of the "Swiss cottage" tent, with a double roof; the outer one projecting all round to form a spacious verandah in front, to cover a closed boot on each side and a bath-room behind. They stood us in excellent stead on the journey, and were brought back in better condition than any other portion of the camp equipage.

These preliminaries amongst other camp requisites settled, the establishment of tent pitchers, mule drivers, &c., engaged, the mess stores and servants provided, the military escort appointed, and—the last though by no means the least in point of importance or latest in the order of adjustment—the arrangements with the Maharaja of Kashmir for the laying out of provisions and stores at the several camp stages across the uninhabited highlands of Tibat by both the Caracoram and Changchanmo routes, as well as for carriage and supplies on the route through Kashmir completed, the camp was ordered to assemble at Rawal Pindi on the 1st July, and on that date Lieut.-Colonel T. E. Gordon (now C.S.I.) arrived there and took command of the whole.

From Rawal Pindi the party marched in two divisions to Murree, and camped there on the Flats, where, since some days previously, the Kashmir officials, agreeably to requisition, had collected a string of eighty or ninety riding and baggage ponies for the use of the embassy. Here I joined the embassy, made the acquaintance of its members, and learned the arrangements for the order of our journey. Each of us was provided with a tent, table, and chair, and three pairs of mule trunks (to which extent our personal luggage was limited), all of uniform pattern, and brand new. Each of us was restricted to two personal servants and two riding horses with their grooms, whilst all in common shared the benefits provided by the mess establishment. The whole of the carriage, the pitching and striking of the tents, and, in fact, the entire camp arrangements were organised with military precision; and from first to last, as our subsequent very grateful experience testified, were most admirably conducted under the able supervision of Captain E. F. Chapman, R.H.A., of the Quarter-Master General's Department, to whom this arduous duty was committed.

On the 15th July, after a couple of days' halt at Murree, the advance party marched *en route* for Srinaggar, under command of Captain J. Biddulph, 19th Hussars, A.D.C. to the Viceroy. His party consisted of Captain H. Trotter, R.E., and his native surveyor Abdus-Subhan and assistants; Dr Ferdinand Stoliczka, Ph.D., of the Geological Survey of India, and his native taxidermist; Rasaidar Afzal Khan, 11th B.C., A.D.C. to Mr Forsyth; Hospital Assistant Asmat Ali and the escort of Infantry, Corps of Guides—ten men with a non-commissioned officer—in charge of the *toshakhana* or "presents"—with camp servants.

Four days later, the head-quarters' camp with Colonel T. E. Gordon, of the Adjutant General's Department, in command, followed on the same route. His party comprised Captain Chapman and myself; Corporal A. Rhind, 92d Highlanders, Camp Sergeant; Munshi Fyz Bakhsh, Persian Secretary to Mr Forsyth; Tara Sing, Treasurer and Accountant; the Mess Establishment; Hospital Dispenser; Jamadar Siffat Khan with ten troopers Cavalry Corps of Guides, and camp servants, and stores, and the reception tents and establishment of the Envoy and Plenipotentiary.

Such was the composition of the head-quarters' camp of the Kashghar Embassy as it set out from Murree on the morning of the 19th July 1873. The rainy season had already set in, and we were prepared to encounter some storms and showers on the few marches that would carry us beyond the limits of the monsoon; but we did hope to make our start in one of those breaks in the heavy charged mass of clouds which so frequently occur on the hills to mitigate the oppressive gloom of the season, and enliven into activity for a short interval the suppressed energies of their animal life, to exhibit in full grandeur the magnificence of their forests and glorious panorama of mountain scenery, and to call forth from all sides a chorus of praise and joy from bird and beast and man.

No such enjoyable respite was our lot. On the contrary, our party started on the march before us in a down-pour of rain such as I have rarely witnessed, and which did a good deal to wash off the bright polish of our new camp equipage, and test the mettle of our men and cattle. Some little delay occurred in loading and starting the 105 mules and ponies, and the three or four score coolies which composed our caravan of transport,

but a little temper and patience soon saw all fairly off the ground, and in as good order and more cheerful spirits than were to be expected under the circumstances. Fortunately the march to Dewal was a short one, and a halt there the next day enabled us to dry our tents and the contents of our boxes. On the 21st we marched ten miles down to Kohala, and there halted the next day. We found a grateful shelter from the stifling heat in this deep and narrow passage of the Jhelam in the dâk-bungalow, whilst our camp filled the compound, and spread along the river bank above its causeway, which we found obstructed in some places by landslips from the slope above.

On the 23rd we resumed our march, and, crossing the swift-surging torrent of the river by a neat little chain suspension bridge a little way beyond the bungalow and its bazar, entered Kashmir territory. From the bridge—where, previous to its construction in 1870, the passage was effected by ferry boat, with at all times more or less of hazard, and too often of loss—there are two routes to the Happy Valley, as the basin of Kashmir is appropriately designated, and both unite at Chikar, where the rise out of the low valley of the Jhelam commences. The shortest, but the most difficult, is that directly over the Danna hill; the other winds round it to the northward through the valley of the Jhelam.

We followed the latter, and, by the successive stages of Chattar, Rara, Thandali, Hattyan, and Chikar, arrived at Chakoti, where we halted a day, and breathed again freely the cool mountain air, which after the simmering heats and worrying mosquitos of the lower hollows was most refreshing to men and cattle alike.

The heat in these little hollows—full as they are with terraced rice cultivation, and shut in on all sides by lofty

mountains—is at this season insupportable, and severely tried our cattle and followers. I felt it much more exhausting than anything I have experienced at the same time of year in the open plains of India—in the Panjab at least. There the heat is high enough, but the air is light and moving, and there is ample breathing room. Here, on the contrary, the sun's rays shine through a stratum of dense vapour, which floats about the mountain tops, and loads the limited atmosphere in the deep shut-in hollows between them with a heavy, stagnant, steamy air which bears one down by the very weight of its oppression.

The route, however, is a well frequented one, and is doubtless familiar to many a Kashmir tourist. I need not, therefore, tarry over its description more than to note that at each stage—which is usually fixed on a small flat of some *talus* as it shelves down to the channel of the river—is a rest house of primitive construction, but none the less of welcome shelter. These bungalows have been built by the Kashmir government for the convenience of travellers and tourists, and their accommodation is free; but attendance and supplies are not provided, though the latter are usually obtainable in the vicinity.

On this occasion of our journey, however, we at each stage found an abundant supply of all sorts of provisions for ourselves and followers, with cattle, coolies, and all sorts of camp forage which the Kashmir officials had collected for the use of the embassy. But this superabundance and assiduous attention was quite exceptional, and only called forth by the special occasion.

On our march along this portion of the route—which is, compared with the hills on the British side of the river, very sparsely peopled—we witnessed the different

modes by which the natives are in the habit of crossing the river.

Owing to its rapids, and the huge boulders obstructing its channel, the stream is neither fordable nor passable by boat, and the means adopted for crossing it depend on the nature of the locality selected for the passage. Thus the Nynsukh, just above its junction with the Jhelam (or, as it is here called, the Bedasta) at Rara, is crossed by a rope bridge of the kind called *nára.* It is a single cord stretched across from bank to bank, and secured on either side to some projecting rock or firmly set tree. The banks here overhang the river in high vertical precipices, and appeared to me at least 150 feet apart. The cord is furnished with a loop cradle which is slung on to it by a forked piece of wood. This last forms the upper part of the cradle which, when once adjusted, is irremovable from the cord, though it slides freely backwards and forwards on it by shaking the cord.

From our camp, on the opposite side of the Jhelam, I watched this very frail-looking arrangement with much interest, in the hope of seeing it used, for on the steep slopes of either bank I could detect no path leading to or from it; but after a while, not finding my curiosity so speedily gratified, I stationed my servant outside the tent with directions to warn me so soon as he saw anybody approach the spot I indicated. Presently he reported a man coming down the hill side. His colour was so much that of the ground that I did not readily distinguish his form until a pair of lank legs caught my eye overtopping a projecting rock, and picking a way along what now appeared as a mere goat track. I followed the course of their owner over the short intervening space to the bridge, and as he approached found I had been watching a nearly naked mountaineer as

thin and poor as the coolies in our camp, his brethren—and our own too in the light of our common Aryan descent. He had a small bundle tied on his back. It looked like a kid-skin of flour on which was placed a folded blanket—signs which betokened that our friend was bound on a journey, for amongst these people of few wants, and not more intellect, the wallet of parched barley meal and the coverlet of coarse wool are the humble representatives of those varied luxuries and multifarious requisites that constitute the travelling accompaniments of civilised man.

Arrived at the bridge our interesting subject hitched up his bundle by a jerk of the tattered scarf that held it, and tightening the ends over one shoulder and under the other arm secured the knot across the chest. He then cast a hasty and timid glance all round, and, without any direct examination of the thread on which he was about to trust his life, cautiously stepped down to the edge of the rock, pulled the cradle to him, seated himself in the loop, the sides of its single cord passing between his flank and arm on each side, and pushing off from the bank shot at once half way across. And now commenced the exciting part of the passage.

In the outset the cradle with its freight slid down the slope of the cord with rapidity and ease, but midway was brought to a stand in the sag produced by its weight, and our venturesome traveller was seen suspended in mid-air over a rushing, roaring, and foaming torrent below. He rested a moment to allow the vibration of the cord to cease, and then commenced to finish the transit. This he did by seizing the cord with both hands and propelling himself forward by a sudden jerk of the legs, grabbing it a foot or two in advance; and so on by a repetition of this process he worked his way

up the slope to the other bank. At each move forward he held firm hold for a moment or two to time the jerk with the vibration of the cord and ease the wooden sling working upon it by that act of propulsion.

The process must be quite as laborious and hazardous as it appeared to my unaccustomed eye, though the people about assured me it was very simple and safe, and that accidents rarely happened though the bridge was in constant use. The cord, I was informed, is nothing but a close, thick, and strong twist of a long climbing plant mixed with the straight twigs of a species of indigofera, both of which grow in plenty on the slopes of all these hills; but the cradle and shore fastenings are of raw hide in addition. These bridges are only used where the banks are very steep and the stretch across not very wide. They require repair every year, but are very strong and capable of crossing horses and sheep, which are for the purpose slung in the cradle as usual, and let gently down one slope by paying out a rope attached to it, and hauled up the other by a similar arrangement.

On the following day at Thandali, the next stage beyond Rara, we saw the river crossed in quite a different manner, and the only one the locality admitted of. Here the ground forms a low flat semicircular reach but little raised above the channel of the river, whilst the opposite bank shelves precipitously to the water's edge; thus affording no points of holdfast for the *nára* or "cord bridge," nor presenting suitable spots for the piers of the *jhúla* or "swing bridge" which we saw further on.

Heavy rain fell during our night's stay at Rara, and amongst other accidents brought my tent down upon me by the snapping short at the joint of two of the three poles that supported it so inefficiently. I was fast asleep

at the time, but the tremendous weight that overpressed me—worse than any nightmare—soon roused me to a sense of impending suffocation. By an instinctive effort my arms raised up the load of weighted canvass enough to allow of my slipping out of bed, but only to find my feet pressing a sodden carpet, spongy as a bog, on the water-logged turf beneath it. Crouching under the prop of my boxes I extricated myself from the ruins in miserable plight, and passed two of the longest hours of my life, coiled up in some damp and musty horse clothing on the top of a mule trunk in one corner of the verandah till daylight dispersed the darkness and revealed the only sound pole already arrived at an angle of forty-five in its desertion of the perpendicular. My erstwhile vainly repeated summons—unheard in the pattering of the rain and the roaring of the Jhelam whose clamour, in the hush of night, reigned supreme and sole, with an intensity magnified by the absence of that hum of activity which enlivens the day with the varied sounds of animal life—now brought my servants to my aid. A few minutes sufficed to set matters right, and then, in a more comfortable mood of body and mind, looking around the scene of my troubles I congratulated myself on the better judgment that resisted the promptings of the moment to essay the shelter of the dâk-bungalow hard by. The house, I knew, was already fully occupied by the tourist families we found in it on arrival, but its verandah would have afforded a dry corner could it be reached. This was just the difficulty I felt in the darkness, and its nature was now apparent, for the space between us, though hardly more than a hundred yards, if as much, was covered with a variety of harmful obstructions. The faggots of firewood, bundles of hay, sacks of barley, and piles of mule gear, with coiled-up

knots of benumbed coolies and shivering ponies which the Kashmir officials had collected here for our use, blocked the way everywhere in the picturesque disorder characteristic of the ways of native camp life.

This heavy rain somewhat delayed our departure, and it was ten o'clock before our camp got away from Rara. The mid-day heat and the heavy stifling atmosphere of Thandali proved very trying to our cattle and men, and justify the numbering of this march amongst the list of those the most memorable for hardship on our long journey.

At Thandali we found the river in full flood, its boisterous current rushing away with quantities of drift, and presenting an appearance far from inviting a swim across its stream. Yet it was here we saw it crossed on the *shináz*, which I was about to describe just now when I digressed to the record of the above personal incident as illustrative of the mishaps of camp life.

The *shináz*, which is commonly used on the Indus, and other rivers of the Panjab, is merely an inflated hide either of the ox or goat. Those we saw here were of the latter animal, and were formed of two separate skins lashed together. Each was separately inflated by blowing through a wooden vent fixed in one of the fore-legs of the hide, and closed by a plug of the same material. The little float thus formed was then held on the edge of the stream till the rider, striding across it, passed each leg through a loop of strapping hanging like a stirrup leather on each side, and, holding each vent plug in either hand, lay his chest upon the hides, and plunged out into the foaming torrent, paddling with arms and legs as in the act of swimming. Much dexterity and skill are required in the proper management of these wonderful little floats to prevent a sudden capsize. We

saw several men out on the *shináz* in quest of the drift borne down by the flood, and to judge from the ease and confidence with which each guided his awkward little craft, they must be practically familiar with its use in this place. The courage with which they buffetted the breakers, and the dexterity with which they avoided the whirl of the rapids, were no less astonishing than the skill with which they secured a passing waif, and the firmness with which they rode as their buoyant supports were borne bounding over the wave tops.

On this occasion we saw the river crossed under exceptionally difficult conditions. In the ordinary state of the current the passage is a simpler matter, and admits of a bundle being carried on the back of the passenger who, if he cannot paddle himself over, may be towed across by another who can.

In the times of the Mughol and Afghan the *shináz* was in much more frequent use than it has been under the more settled government that has succeeded their turbulent rule in this country. It was then the means by which robber bands crossed either to harry their neighbour's territory, or to escape the pursuit of their enemies, as from its portability and ready adjustment it proved a safe and expeditious mode of overcoming the water obstructions of the country. About midway between Rara and Thandali, and on the opposite side of the river, a little above the junction of the Kishanganga with the Jhelam, is the town of Muzaffarabad, where are the ruins of a large *sarae* of the Mughol period. The Afghans, when they held Kashmir, kept a garrison here for the protection of the road, which was in their time infested by robber bands. This road which, from Muzaffarabad onwards to Baramulla, runs parallel to the route we followed on the opposite side of the river, is known as the

Durrani road of Pakli and Damtaur, and is the easiest and most practicable of all the routes leading to Kashmir, being open all the year round.

At Hattyan, the next stage beyond Thandali, we saw the "swing bridge," or *jhúla*, which I have before mentioned. There were two of them, within sight of each other, between Hattyan and Garhi. The latter is a considerable village on the opposite side of the river, which here flows in a wide channel flanked by high banks, the stream itself varying in breadth from fifty or sixty to a hundred and fifty or more yards.

The *jhúla* consists of three ropes stretched across the stream, at a height of eight or ten feet, between two buttress piers, built up of loose boulders and brushwood faggots, at the edges of the current. Each pier slopes as a causeway on the land side, and drops as a wall towards the water, whilst in its substance are imbedded several strong upright posts as supports for the bridge ropes. These ropes are disposed across from side to side in a triangular form, so that a cross section would mark the points of a capital V, thus ·.·—two parallel ropes forming the upper plane, and a central one the lower plane. This disposition is maintained throughout the stretch by large V shaped prongs of wood, which, at intervals of four or five yards, are secured in position above and below by thongs of raw hide, and further strengthened above by a cording which is passed across between the two upper points where they are fixed to those ropes.

The stretch of the bridge was about eighty yards, and it hung with a considerable bend by its own weight, whilst the wind swayed it from side to side in an alarming manner. It is crossed by the passenger walking on the lower of the ropes, which is sometimes of double or treble strand, and holding his balance with the hands on the upper

ropes, which run at each side on a level with his shoulders. I saw four men cross this bridge at the same time, and two of them carried bundles on their backs. They followed each other at intervals of four or five paces, and were careful to walk "out of step" so as to prevent the dangerous undulation which would have jerked them off their narrow footing had they kept "in step." As they arrived at the prongs in succession they cautiously "ducked" under the cross cords, and I noticed that only one man at a time passed between any two of the prongs. The weight of these four men bore down the bridge, in the middle of its span, quite to the surface of the water, and, indeed, I saw one man's feet immersed in the crest of a wave. The shock of this "catch" did not, as I expected it would, throw him off his footing, but it set the whole loop a swinging and vibrating in a manner most uncomfortable to witness. The commotion, however, did not for a moment stop the progress of the passengers, and I saw them land on the other side, and take their several ways without ever a glance back at the awkward path they had trodden so skilfully, or, most probably, a thought of the peril they had escaped.

At this place the charger of one of our guide's cavalry escort, whilst being led along by the groom, fell over the bank, a sheer drop of sixty to eighty feet, into the river, and was borne by the current to a small island flat in its mid-stream, a little way lower down. The unfortunate creature was there found to have broken a thigh bone, and was consequently put out of suffering by a bullet through the head. Captain Chapman crossed over on a *shináz* for this merciful duty. This accident at the outset of our march was the only loss that befell the troop horses of our little escort in all our journey. From Hattyan our next stage was to Chikar, where the

Danna road from Kohalá joins the main route. At this place we quitted the low, hot valley of the Jhelam, and beyond it rose up to the cool forest tracts, which on this side of the river extend on to the entrance of the Wolar basin—the renowned Vale of Kashmir (Kashi Merú ?)—at Baramulla.

The change was no less agreeable on account of the improved climate than on that of the finer scenery. At Dewal and Kohala we left behind us the forests that give the Murree hills their charm, and, crossing the river at the latter place, entered quite a different climate and country.

From Kohala to Chikar our route lay through the narrow winding pass of the river Jhelam, over an interrupted *talus* strip, cut at intervals by deep ravines, through which pour the torrent feeders of the main stream below. On its shelving slopes are terraced flats of rice and maize cultivation, and the homesteads of its peasantry, surrounded by their orchards and hedges. Between these occupied plots the general surface of the uneven tract is set with a more or less abundant brushwood jungal, of which the dodonæa, carissa, wild olive, barberry, jujube, adhatoda, &c., with the wild fig, rottlera, and other such trees, are the chief components.

Above this river-bank tract the hills slope away to lofty peaks, presenting, in infinite variety of surface, a vast extent of uniformly verdant pasture, which (broken by neither rock nor forest) spreads up their sides to the highest summits.

At Chikâr we left this tame scene, and passed on to a wooded region, the pine and cedar forests of which vie in magnificence with the majestic heights they clothe, and afford many a prospect—alone well worth the journey—to gaze upon.

Our next stage on was to Chakoti, where we halted a day. On this march we passed some small camps of Gipsies, generically styled *kanjar*, on the tramp to the Happy Valley. They were as ragged, conservative, and happy in their dirt and poverty, as they are found to be elsewhere, and to judge from their naked forms were as indifferent to the cool breezes of the mountains as they are to the hot blasts of the plains. We also met some large caravans of *kút*—the "costum" of the ancients—bound to Rawal Pindi. We had met several of these convoys on the three or four preceding marches, during which we also overtook some Peshawar traders driving their small convoys of twelve and fifteen mules, laden with asafœtida and snuff respectively, to the Srinaggar market; but on this occasion I noticed three convoys, said to consist of eighty bullocks each. I learned from one of the drivers that the root was collected on the hills near the Zojila pass, and when we arrived there I got some specimens of the plant by sending a man off into the hills to fetch them. The driver told me that each bullock carried two maunds of *kút*, and that the drug was bought by the merchants at Rawal Pindi, at the rate of a rupee per *ser* of two pounds. Some idea of the quantity of this root which is annually carried out of Kashmir may be formed from the approximate data I got from this man. The 240 loads of this drug which we met on this day—and its peculiar odour loaded the air around—represent, at eighty pounds per maund, a total of 38,400 pounds of *kút*, worth at Rawal Pindi 19,206 rupees. We had already, in the previous stages, passed nearly as large a quantity, and my informant assured me that several similar convoys would follow during the next three weeks.

It appears that anybody can go and collect the roots

where they grow, but the peasantry of the vicinity are usually employed to do so. The plant grows wild and in great abundance in certain localities, and I could learn of no restrictions or regulations concerning its collection. The root is largely consumed in India in the service of the Hindu temples, and is exported from Bombay to China, where it is used as incense.

In the umbrageous gullies and ravines about Chakoti, I added several specimens to the collection of little birds I had been shooting on the march up, but none so beautiful as a white bird of paradise with a long, graceful tail, and a bright purple green beak; and the male of the same species, but of a russet colour. On arrival at Srinaggar, I despatched a tin-lined case of these birds to India, whence, in the following year, they were sent home. On opening the cases—for two others of the five I filled shared a like fate by spending a rainy season in Calcutta—the tin was found honeycombed with rust, and the contents utterly destroyed by the ravages of the weevil. Fortunately the birds collected north of Leh escaped this exposure, and arrived in sound condition.

The march from Chakoti to Uri is picturesque, but trying to laden cattle, owing to the steep ascents and descents across the succession of deep ravines that cut the road, which is otherwise good, and shaded. There is a good deal of cultivation on the route, fields of rice, maize, cotton, and pulse, of the kind called *máh*, occupying the terraced flats on each side of the way. In the intervals between these productive patches the road is hedged about by the filbert and jujube, the pomegranate and mulberry, the fig and apricot, the diospyrus (called *amlúk*), and pear, with the grape vine twining in intricate leafy coils amongst them; all in the wild state—excelling in foliage, failing in fruit.

Our camp at Uri was pitched, between the fort and the stage bungalow, on a high shelf of turf land backed by hills of charming aspect, rich in the variety of their forest foliage, and glad in their pastures of brightest green. This is the prettiest spot we have yet camped on, and the clear, sunny sky spread above the fleecy vapours floating about the hill-tops favoured us with a view of the scenery in its full beauty; whilst the measure of its enjoyment, in the calm that comes with the fading light of a setting sun, was filled by the grateful notes of the bagpipe—the music, of all others, in harmony with the occasion. It was the first time our camp sergeant, Corporal Rhind, a piper of the 92nd Highlanders, tuned his pipes on the march; and he could not have selected a more fit opportunity for the essay of those performances with which he so often enlivened the dull hours of our subsequent experience.

The fort is a mud structure, capable of accommodating a garrison of 200 men, and looks up and down the river from the edge of a high cliff which here projects into one of its many bends. Below it is a *jhúla*, or "swing bridge," by which the Muzaffarabad road, on the opposite side, is reached.

The march from Uri to Urihan Boin (the *n* of the last word is nasal) is through a most interesting tract by a good road, which now runs across the face of precipitous hills that overtop lofty cliffs dropping straight to the river—itself a foaming rapid, surging with ceaseless tumult down the gorge—and anon winds through shady forests of the stately cedar and umbrageous plane, of the comely sycamore and the bounteous walnut, with the familiar hawthorn and favourite hazel amongst a host of others, each with its special uses or peculiar beauties.

About midway on the march we passed the ruins of a

temple of the early Hindu period. The massive blocks of its carefully chiselled limestone, in the confusion of their heap, revealed only the basement of the central temple and the portal of the quadrangle which once enclosed it; and there was nobody to tell the history of those who in the solitude of its cloisters worshipped the Supreme Essence in the midst of surroundings eminently favouring the attainment of their desire—the final absorption into the object of their devotion, the Supreme Essence, the Universal Creator, the Author of all Nature.

On the next march we passed a similar ruin in a more perfect state of preservation. It is built of great blocks of amygdaloid trap, and is called Banihar (or Ban Vihara—"The forest monastery"). In the centre of the space enclosed by the quadrangle of cloisters stood the temple, on the top of a solid basement which was ascended by a flight of steps facing the gateway. The upper part had evidently been renewed, and when we passed was occupied by a poor Brahmin who attended to the service of the two emblems that stood on the altar—a small stone *lingam* set in the *yuni*, anointed with oil and garlanded with flowers—the worship of a degraded Brahmanism in the place of a departed mystic Budhism. At Baramulla there are side by side other relics of both religious systems, and amongst them a *lingam* or priapus cut out of a solid block of sandstone, about four feet in diameter and sixteen feet high, and set on a masonry platform little above the level of the encroaching turf.

The last miles of this march are singularly interesting, and mark the spot at which the basin beyond burst its bounds and drained its contents through the gorge now occupied by the Bedasta or Jhelam. The road lies at the foot of stupendous cliffs of slate, the vertical strata of

which correspond exactly with the formation of the rock on the opposite bank just below Uri, a distance of ten miles down the gorge.

From the similarity of geological phenomena at these spots of similar appellation I was curious to ascertain whether there was any connection between them to account for the coincidence, but my inquiries failed to elicit any reason for such supposition, though they afforded a clue to the designations of the two localities.

In the Kashmiri language, or, as it is here called, Kashuri, *uri* is the name of a tree—a species of the cœsalpinia—which abounds in the forests of the vicinity; and *boin* is also the name of a tree—the oriental plane, the *chinar* of the vernacular dialect—which forms so prominent a feature in the landscape of the valley. Uri, therefore, may be rendered Anglice—"The cœsalpinia trees," and Urihan Boin (the first word is the oblique plural of *uri*) as "The casalpinia and plane trees," though—if my memory serves aright—I saw no representative of the first named at either place. There is another tree, however, of very similar name, which is common in both the localities. It is the *wurri* or "filbert," and may with as much propriety as the first be taken as the derivative of the topographical name.

Leaving Urihan Boin we marched to Baramulla, and camped—on the 1st of August—a little above the fort on the river bank, and just within the area of the Kashmir basin whose wide plain, encircled by a glorious panorama of hills, spread out before us a charming landscape and most inviting picture, with the option of proceeding by land or water; for from this point up to Islamabad at the opposite side of the valley the Bedasta, or Behut, as it is here called, is navigated.

Our last march into the valley partook of the delightfully

refreshing character of the two preceding stages, but on emerging from the hills we parted from the grand scenery of their majestic heights for the soft champaign of the plain; which, however, possesses peculiar attractions of its own, no less grateful to the senses it lulls to repose with a calm pleasure than are healthful the exhilarating air and inspiriting scenery of the mountain tracts around.

At three or four miles out from camp we passed the ruins of Banihar, an ancient Hindu monastery of the flourishing period of Budhism, which I have already mentioned. On the opposite side of the road are a few suttlers' huts, at which the traveller can refresh himself and beast.

At Baramulla we saw the first of those extraordinary constructions which form so peculiar a feature of the river scene at Srinaggar—a new form of bridge, in the variety of which structures this country seems so prolific.

It spans the river just above the town on a succession of six piers, and is composed entirely of undressed logs of pine and cedar timber. The whole tree trunk, in fact, lopped of its branches. The strongest and longest of them, laid side by side, are stretched across from pier to pier to form the roadway, and merely rest, without any further security, by two or three feet of their length at either end upon the tops of the opposite piers, which may be from twenty to twenty-five feet apart.

The piers are built up of similar logs arranged side by side in layers of a square shape, the logs of each successive layer crossing those of the other at right angles, and lodging in notches cut in the logs below. The lowest layers are the broadest and diminish gradually as they ascend to the centre, above which they again expand

successively up to the top, where the logs equal in length those at the bottom, thus giving the pier an hourglass sort of contraction. The piers rest on a foundation of stones embedded in the muddy bottom of the river, and are protected against its current by a cut-water pointing up the stream, and built of loose stones filled into a frame of logs. Above they are furnished with upright posts, which support the railing that runs on each side of the roadway span.

This kind of bridge is called *kaddal*, which appears to be the Kashuri form of the Hindi *kathan*—"made of wood," and is very strong and durable despite its ricketty construction and very dilapidated appearance. There are six or eight of them on the river at Srinaggar, which bear the traffic of the two halves of the city, and some of them are further weighted with a row of shops on each side the way; most perilous looking abodes projecting in all degrees of obliquity above the main structure, and from its sides over the stream.

The timber being cedar is very durable, and accidents rarely occur, owing to the elasticity of the construction, and the outlet afforded to sudden floods through the many passages in the substance of the piers. I witnessed the behaviour of these bridges in the inundation of 1869, and though they were nearly swamped by the flood, none of them gave way, whilst many of the houses on the river's bank—the one I occupied amongst the first—were completely destroyed.

CHAPTER II.

FROM Baramulla our camp marched to Pattan, and halted a day under the shade of some magnificent plane trees, from the high-spreading boughs of which the golden oriole whistled out his plaintive cry, and the starling chattered in convivial company. I measured the girth of the two trees beneath whose shade my tent was pitched; and, taking them at about five feet from the ground, found the one to be twenty feet round the clear trunk, and the other twenty-one feet two inches.

At this place there are the ruins of two ancient temples, built of blue limestone, carefully chiselled and carved, in the same massive and enduring style as those before mentioned, and like those of Martand, at the further end of the valley, supposed to be dedicated to the sun. There is also in course of erection, almost within a stone-throw of them, but of just the opposite characters, one of those hideous-looking constructions—those rambling blocks of mud and stone and raw brick, whose patchwork walls are kept together in their erratic lines by a lumbering frame of rough logs and undressed planks—which are making their appearance in all parts of the valley for the rearing of silkworms; an industry recently introduced by the Maharaja as a government monopoly.

Whilst wandering, gun in hand, amongst these eloquent witnesses of the civilisation of the past and of the present in this historic land, I shot some specimens of

the Kashmir cuckoo, and a beautifully coloured bee-eater; and then mounting the high clay banks to the right got a wide view of the valley and its lake-basin lying ahead of our position.

After the scenery we had just come through, the view spread before us was in its immediate objects not altogether so pleasing. The wide stretch of reed swamp belting the Wolar lake, and the scattered farmsteads and hamlets marking the accessible borders of this pestiferous tract, from their dead level and unvaried repetition of the same elements wherever the eye turned in the survey of the landscape, proved if not disappointing, at least unattracting. But the *coup d'œil* beyond—the *tout ensemble* of the valley and its surroundings—presented a prospect worthy of admiration, unique of its kind, and exceeding in extent of scope, as it excels in point of beauty, anything that is to be found elsewhere within the range of vision from a single point of view. Projecting on to the plain from various points of its circumference are those strange banks of lacustrine deposit—here called *karewa*—which mark a former coast line, and interpose their bare promontories to break the even spread of grove and field, and to improve the landscape by variety in the form of its unchanging elements. Between them are the wide sweeping gulfs and bays, and the tributary valleys that shelter the rural population and reward their toil with the fruits of a grateful soil. Whilst above them all rises that glorious circle of mountains which constitute the natural limit of the region, and the most remarkable feature of its scenery—their belts of black forest and slopes of green pasture showing in vivid contrast with the snowy summits and glistening peaks that form the crowning beauty of the whole.

Soon after our arrival at Pattan we received a visit from Diwan Badri Nath, a high official of the Kashmir court, who, on the part of his Highness the Maharaja, welcomed us to Srinaggar, and delivered the friendly messages he was charged with with an innate suavity and politeness of manner quite charming in themselves, and the more appreciable, because they were not mere empty words, as the arrangements for the comfort of our march thus far abundantly proved.

In the afternoon I accompanied Colonel Gordon to return his visit, and next morning they rode off together in advance to select a site for our camp, which is to halt some days at Srinaggar to equip our men and cattle with warm clothing for the journey across the passes. We followed with the camp next morning, and on arrival at the river-bank below the city were met by Pandit Hira Nand, chief of the city police, who was awaiting us with one of the Maharaja's state barges to convey us by water to the Nasim Bagh, where Captain Biddulph's party was camped.

Captain Chapman and I accordingly took our seats on the chairs set for us under the canopy of the pinnace, and were paddled up to our destination by thirty boatmen, whilst the camp, crossing at the first bridge, followed the land route, and joined the advance party under Captain Biddulph, whose camp we found pitched on the shore of the Dall lake, under the shade of the plane trees of the celebrated park here laid out by the Emperor Akbar—the Nasim Bagh.

The trip up the river was a very agreeable change, particularly in the gorgeous and swift conveyance which had been so very thoughtfully provided for us, for the march was a long one, and the sun nearing the meridian was growing uncomfortably strong. And it

was no less interesting on account of the excellent river-view of this remarkable city which we were enabled to enjoy from the shelter of the open pavilion in which we were seated. It was an oblong chamber built up in the centre of the boat, and highly decorated in that intricate pattern peculiar to the artists of Kashmir, and so well-known for that marvellous blending of colour which, without disturbance of harmony amongst all, presents a groundwork of either according to the light in which it is viewed. The shallow vaulted roof was supported midway by pillars which divided the chamber into two compartments, and at the sides by others which were fitted for shutters to close the whole when necessary. The weather being fine we found these last had been removed, and consequently, the roof, supported on its pillars alone, formed a canopy or pavilion open on all sides above the panel of the basement.

The scene on either bank, as one is borne along through the midst of the city, is bewildering by the variety and the novelty of the sights that catch the eye at every turn ; yet there is a sameness that pervades the whole, and characterises it as essentially local.

The succession of bridges, under whose spans of creaking and trembling logs—for arches they are not to be called—our boat was shot with a speed against stream hardly less than that of the more humble craft coming down with it, are all members of one family ; each a singular repetition of the other, and all alike in their tumbledown look, and peculiar structure, and decayed appearance. The boats, too, which float amongst them, our own not excepted, in all their different sizes and various fittings, are of one shape and one resemblance. Whether it be the light and painted state-barge, or the ponderous and unadorned rice-boat ; whether it be the

swift pinnace with its elegant canopy and many paddles, or the more leisurely travelling-boat, with its mat roof and mud-built cooking-range; or whether it be the skiff of the fisherman and fowler, or the punt of the market-gardener and caltrops-picker, they are all of one pattern and one build—a flat keelless bottom, straight ribless sides, and tapering ends that rise out symmetrically fore and aft, prow and stern alike for advance or retreat.

Of such form, these boats are well suited for the conveyance of heavy burthens on a smooth stream; but they are most dangerous craft on rough water. From the wide hold they take of the water they gain buoyancy in respect to freight, but they lose it in the matter of riding. Instead of rising over the waves they present an obstacle over which they break, and the surf pouring over the low sides soon swamps the vessel.

The natives rarely venture far away from shore in heavily-laden boats, and when crossing the Wolar lake usually coast along its sides so that, if per chance caught by one of the squalls which so often sweep its surface, they can run as to a safe port into the belt of weeds bordering its shores; for here the water-lily, duckweed, and caltrops, with other aquatic plants, cover the water with a continuous spread of broad leaves which float on the surface and prevent its being disturbed by the wind.

But to return to the river view. The mass of houses built on the masonry embankments which rise out of the water on either hand, and display here and there amongst the varied components of their structure the chiselled blocks of some ancient palace or temple; incessantly draw the eyes from side to side by the attraction of some new form, and present a spectacle no less novel in character than strangely diverse in its uniformity as a whole.

The gable roofs, with their untidy thatch of beech bark and their attic lofts open at both ends, rest so insecurely upon the loose-jointed frame of upright poles they cover that they seem ready to fly away with the first gale of wind, and certainly constitute the most peculiar feature of the architecture everywhere. Whether on the king's palace or the peasant's cottage, on the merchant's store or the mechanic's shop, or whether on the Hindu's barrack or the Musalman's mosque, this draughty log-built roof is the same in character on all.

The edifices it surmounts present a greater variety of structure, though in all—except in the palaces and Hindu temples, which are built throughout of solid masonry—the framework of upright poles fixed upon a raised platform of masonry forms the skeleton. This framework is held together by cross-trees and rafters and closed in, tier above tier, either by a planking of rough-split logs or a thin wall of bricks and mortar. The interior partitions are of lath and plaster, and the compartments are lighted very much less than they are ventilated—as many a tourist in the "Happy Valley" must have discovered to his cost in comfort—by those lattice windows, so rich in the variety and elegance of their designs, which are, with the carved woodwork of the portals, the most agreeable features of Kashmir architectural decoration; so far at least as exterior appearance is concerned, for the matter of interior comfort is quite another consideration, and dependent for its merits upon the views or means of the occupants.

Glass windows are unknown out of the palaces and the mansions of the wealthy. The lattice window supplies their place, and how inefficiently may be readily understood when one learns that the only device adopted for keeping out the wind is a sheet of paper pasted over the

fretwork, whilst the cold air pouring in over the open coping is considered out of reach and submitted to as a matter of course.

The very general use of timber for house-building in Kashmir, and the loose putting together of the beams and logs, is said to be necessitated by the frequency of earthquakes in the country. It seems, however, that other causes are not without potent influence in determining the preference. And notably the character of the people for physical inactivity—a trait which is exemplified in the nature of all their industries.

Their shawls and embroideries, their silver work and *papier-maché*-painting, their stone-engraving and wood-carving, &c., all alike exhibit proofs of wonderful delicacy and minute detail, but tell of no active expenditure of muscular force. Where this is required, as in house-building, we find it exercised only to the smallest extent absolutely indispensable for the attainment of the object desired. Hence, though stone is abundant and more durable, the easily-felled and floated timber is put together in a style of unfinish altogether independent of adaptation to stability under the conditions assigned. Doubtless the humid character of the climate and the soft nature of the soil may have their share of influence, which must not be overlooked. But with the relics of ancient edifices of ponderous stone and the existing buildings of substantial masonry before us on the spot, these conditions, it would appear, offer no serious obstacle to a more finished and substantial style of architecture to that which is in vogue here. Such as they are, however, the houses of Srinaggar constitute the most prominent feature in the view of the city as seen on the way up its stream. And more special objects amongst them are the new houses rising on the river frontage—

very welcome signs, in their elaborate finish and straight angles and neat lines, of the march of civilisation and adoption of modern improvement; the lofty piles of its principal mosques topped with those peculiar belfry-like towers supported midroof—testimonies to the architect's recognition of the dictates of taste as superior to the claims of conventional form; and those shapeless little idol temples of stone and mortar which, though in the front rank on the river's bank, would be passed unnoticed but for the glare of their tinsel and gilt —incongruous objects in this quaint jumble of woodwork structures. It remains to fill in the picture with man, whose presence and activity enliven the scene and complete the speciality of its character. In a city so well situated as a centre for the trade of the countries beyond the passes, one might naturally look for the representatives of the different surrounding regions amidst the crowd of its inhabitants, but they are not to be found—or at least they do not appear amongst the moving forms that pass before the eyes of the mere traveller—in anything like the number expected.

As it is, the familiar forms of the Afghan and Sikh, met here in so frequent recurrence, claim no such interest from us as do those of the people the one ruled in this valley not so very long ago, and the other rules at the present time. Nor do the few members of those little known tribes of the outlying districts of Dardistan, Baltistan, and Bhotan who are found here as government servants, more than excite a transient curiosity amidst the crowd of natives which more fully attracts the attention. It is the Hindu Pandit and the Musalman Kashmiri who are the chief actors in that busy scene of life and activity which at this season meets the eye at every turn in the river's course.

The Pandit, or Batta as he is styled by his Muhammadan brother, if not recognised by the nicer distinctions of manner and speech, or the difference in dress and occupation, may be at once distinguished by the paint-marks carefully set on the forehead as the tokens of his religious purity.

He is seen as the well-to-do merchant, with a party of his fellows passing up and down the stream, seated on the matted floor of the Srinaggar gondola, in animated chat on the concerns of his business; his comfortable form bulging between the tight strings of his spotless linen, and enveloped in the loose folds of his soft warm shawl. Or he is found *en deshabille* performing his ablutions, immersed at the edge of the current under which his shaven head, with its lank crown-top lock, bobs now and again as he gabbles through the formula of his prayers; his hands the while, held up to the sun, pouring back to the river the drops they had raised from it, or quickly passing through the fingers the threads of the *janeo* which encircles his body; unmindful alike of the presence of the stranger or the proximity of his womenkind—the reputed fair Panditani—who (the latter), in like undisguise, may be disporting herself in the same element, or, concealed within the ample folds of her shapeless gown, may be washing her linen or filling her pitcher at the brink. Or else he is observed as the Brahmin priest—his withered and emaciated form divested of all covering but the indecent loin-clout—seated on his hams cooking his simple fare of unleavened cakes and pottage, and guarding scrupulously the purity of the spot sanctified for the operation; or, seated crosslegged at the door of his temple, he is reciting the *shastar* with a volubility equal to the swaying to and fro of his body; or else, motionless and silent, he is absorbed in a trance

of meditation, or more probably of mental torpor and abstraction. Or he is seen, writing-case and paper in hand, as the civil functionary—the scribe, the notary, or the tax-collector—in the pursuit of his special avocation, or, as the corn chandler, on the river-barges superintending the discharge of rice into the government granaries, or its sale to the people.

The Kashmiri, or Kâshuri as he styles himself, constituting the bulk of the population, presents a greater diversity of ranks and occupations. These, from the barely clothed cooly and poverty-stricken peasant to the richly clad merchant and wealthy proprietor, are all to be seen in the course of a tour through the water-way of the city. The silversmiths, lapidaries, *papier-maché* artists, shawl-weavers, silk embroiderers, and other artificers are, of course, only to be seen to advantage in their workshops on either side of the river. Here we are concerned only with the scene on its banks, and they consequently need no further notice in this place beyond the mention of their general resemblance in outward appearance to the Hindu portion of the population, from whom they are sometimes, in the absence of the paint-marks or *tika*, only to be distinguished by the different folding of the turban.

The special actor on the river-scene is naturally the boatman. His lithe, active form—bared for the task—is seen everywhere as it bends to the rapid strokes of his paddle; and his merry voice, too often raised in unseemly wrangle and vociferous vituperation, is heard above all other sounds. His family, who live in the boat with him, are seen variously occupied upon the banks; the children—remarkable for their bright eyes, and soft, pleasing features—disporting themselves on the limited planking of their homes moored alongside; whilst the mother and elder daughters are

busy on the beach in that laborious and unsightly task of husking their daily modicum of rice. The loose-sleeved and very roomy shift, which, like a long night-shirt, covers the body from neck to foot, and forms, with the characteristic cap of red fillet, their only dress—jerking up and down as their arms ply the pestle upon the grain—is not the least strange sight of the many that here amuse the visitor. And this particular one, from the awkwardness of the implements—the pestle being nothing but a pole of wood rounded at each end, and the mortar a mere cup excavated in a clumsy log of the same material—suggests reflection on the apathetic character of the people, who with such an easy command of water-power can tolerate so burdensome a task.

It was through such a scene as this, the main features of which I have attempted to delineate by words, that we passed on our way to the Nasim Bagh. The last part of our route wound through that series of canals which intersect the swamps lying between the city and Dall lake. They are at this season nearly choked by the abundance of the water-weeds that shoot up from their shallow bottoms to mature their fruit on the surface, and wither and rot; whilst their tangled meshes obstruct the passage, and poison the air with the stench of the mephitic odours evolved from the festering mass of their luxuriant foliage.

Between these narrow channels are small blocks of water-logged land, on which stand the log-huts and orchards of the market gardeners who supply the city with vegetables. They rise little above the level of the water, and are divided by cross trenches into fields, or plots whose banks are lined by rows of willows. Between these banks, which are further supported by stakes, and raised above the general level by heaps of the decayed weeds drawn from the bottom of

the canals, the little skiffs of the cultivators ride their way over the mass of reeds concealing the passage from the eye of the stranger, and thus pass from one end to the other of this pestiferous tract of labyrinthine swamp.

The produce of these gardens are cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, and tobacco, and that of the canals and shores of the lakes—which is spontaneous—are the water caltrops or *singhara*—the fruit of which forms an important item as a breadstuff in the food products of the country, and is under government protection—and the *nidar*, or root-stalk of the water-lily (whose beautiful pink flowers are the *pánpawsh* of the Dall lake) which is largely consumed as a vegetable. Passing beyond these canals, we entered the circular pool, called the Dall, by one of those clear passages between the reed beds which stretch across its centre, and came upon the floating gardens. These are formed of strips of decayed weeds which have been fished up from the bottom of the lake by means of a pole dexterously twisted amongst their long fibres. They are staked to the bottom where they float by long poles, and are covered above with small heaps of earth in which the melon seed is sown. They are capable of supporting the weight of two or three men at a time; but great caution is necessary to prevent the feet breaking through their flimsy, rotten structure.

On the lake we found a number of little skiffs, each with its single occupant, dotted about the surface. Here, in the line of our route, were two or three weighed down with the pile of weeds their owners were poling up from below for the repair of their floating melon beds, or maybe for the formation of a new one. There, along the shore, were a whole bevy of women, each paddling her own canoe with the one hand, whilst the other was rapidly plucking the duckweed that overspreads the sur-

face, and throwing it into the hollow behind her with an eager haste, as though there was not enough to meet the wants of all. It is a favourite fodder for cattle, and is said to improve the milk of kine fed upon it. Further away, on the calm, open surface of the lake, rode motionless three or four boats as if moored to so many stakes, whilst the occupant of each, reclining crouched up, composed himself, head resting at the post, for a mid-day nap. Their occupants were fishermen, and far from asleep, were watchfully looking down the shaft of the *narits* or "harpoon" they poised in one hand to spear the first fish passing beneath its prongs.

We now came abreast of the handsome mosque of Hazrat Bal, the favourite resort of holiday folks, and passing its village, and the long array of bathing-closets half submerged in the waters of the lake, were presently landed at our camp a little beyond. Here, on the 4th August, we rejoined our comrades who preceded us from Murree.

The evening of our arrival closed with an abrupt end to the career of a favourite little pet of mine. He was a handsome and vivacious little Scotch terrier born of imported parents, and was the very simile of the bright-eyed little one represented in Landseer's "Dignity and Impudence." He came into my hands as a tiny pup only a few weeks old, when I was here in 1869—a gift from my friend and former comrade in the Corps of Guides, Captain C. W. Hawes—and spent his infant days gambolling on the turfy spot to which he now returned only to find a grave under its sod. He had always proved a faithful and intelligent little companion, and a bold champion for his master, and now sacrificed his life in the rash defence of his domain. We were seated at dinner under the spreading boughs of some splendid plane trees on the bank overlooking the shore of the

lake—the dark shades of the approaching night but dimly pierced by the light of the lamps on our table, and concealing all beyond the range of their rays in a veil of black obscurity—when some hungry pariahs prowling in the vicinity, attracted by the savoury odours of our viands, gathered round the lighted spot, and peering at us from the edge of the darkness whence they had emerged began stealthily to encroach on the privacy of our temporary domain. Their appearance was immediately announced by the challenge of my vigilant little friend who, pursuing their retreat, plunged after them into the darkness. An angry fight and a faint bark for assistance soon hurried us with lights to the spot. The great wolfish pariahs were driven from their worry, and my poor dog lay moribund on the ground. His ribs had been crushed in, and he was torn all over, and expired in a few minutes without ever a groan. Poor little Jingo! His death was very sudden, and its sadness heightened by the associations of the locality. I was sorry to lose him, for he was an affectionate and brave dog, and an universal favourite in the camp, where the natives called him *Jangu*—"the warrior." His death was fully avenged next day, and half-a-dozen savage, mangy curs fell to our rifles.

Shortly after our arrival in camp, Wazir Ram Dhan made his appearance, attended by a long retinue of servants bearing the various comestibles of the *dali* or "entertainment" sent by the Maharaja. The Wazir set them in array on the turf in front of Colonel Gordon's tent, and welcoming us to Kashmir in the name of His Highness, made the customary health inquiries, and expressed a hope that the arrangements made for our march were such as met approval.

The *dali* comprised a number of sheep and fowls, and dozens of great pottery jars of rice, and flour, with sugar,

tea, fruits, and spices, and butter and kitchen stuff of sorts in liberal proportion. They were disposed of in the usual manner—that is, for the most part shared amongst our servants—and our visitor dismissed with compliments and grateful acknowledgments to his master.

Next day, according to arrangement by the Resident, Mr Le Poer Wynne, we proceeded to visit the Maharaja. At five o'clock in the afternoon his Prime Minister, Diwan Kirpa Ram, arrived in our camp, and after a ceremonial visit conducted our party to the palace in the Sher Garhi Fort, whence a pinnace of the kind called *parinda*, or "Flier," from its rapid progress, had been sent for our conveyance. Maharaja Ranbir Sing met us at the door of the terrace overlooking the river on which he received us, and greeting each in turn in a friendly manner conducted Colonel Gordon to the chair on the right of his own, the rest of us finding seats on either side. A brief conversation followed on general topics, and then turned on the subject of our journey. Our host warned us of the difficulties of the country on the northern frontier of his territory, and said that, though he had no personal knowledge of its character, the reports of his officials described it as an inhospitable desert waste on which the traveller, however well provided with creature comforts, was liable to suffer from the extremity of cold and the difficulty of respiration. He added, complimenting us on the enterprising character of our nation, that we would doubtless overcome such obstacles; and so far as he was concerned, the country he ruled being our own, and his interests identical with ours, we had his best wishes for a prosperous journey and safe return. In proof of which, he concluded, he had issued orders for every assistance to be rendered to our party in all parts of the country under his rule.

On rising to take leave His Highness conducted Colonel

Gordon to the door, and there, as on arrival, shaking hands all round, dismissed us.

Next morning (the 6th August) Captain Biddulph's party, with Captain Trotter and Dr Stoliczka, marched away in advance *en route* for Leh ; thence to meet us, by way of the Chang-channmo route, at Shahidulla, which had been fixed as the rendezvous prior to advancing to Yarkand. And in the evening, at the same hour as yesterday, Colonel Gordon, Captain Chapman, and I proceeded to return the visit of Diwan Kirpa Ram, under conduct of Pandit Hira Nand, who came up from the Fort in a government *parinda* to do the honours of the ceremony. The Diwan received us in his official residence, adjoining the palace, with every mark of attention, and expressed himself highly gratified at the honour we had conferred on him. He displayed an earnestness to please us, and do all in his power to make smooth the difficulties of our route ; and assured us, that by the Maharaja's orders, he had issued minute instructions to all the frontier officials as to the supply of provisions, with strict injunctions that they were to spare no efforts to ensure our comfort and safety on the march through their respective charges. On taking leave he expressed his hope that we would find the arrangements made for the furtherance of our journey such as would meet our approval.

The experiences of the road so far certainly testified to the sincerity of his words, whilst our future experiences, as it will be my agreeable duty to record hereafter—more fully than we could have expected, both on the march up and down—proved the perfect faith and thorough goodwill of our Kashmir friends.

The day had been a thoroughly wet one, and the clouds only began to break and clear away to the mountain tops

as we set out for our visit. The river was hardly affected by this rainfall at the time of our return to camp, but during the night it rose in flood and inundated the Chinar Bagh to a depth of eight feet. This is a handsome plantation of very fine plane trees on the bank of the Tsunt Kul or " Apple Tree Canal," which leads from the river to the sluice gates of the Dall lake, and from its proximity to the city was at first thought of as the most convenient site for our camp. Other considerations, however, on the score of health and discipline, decided in favour of the more distant and less humid spot, and we very fortunately escaped the inconveniences of a midnight stampede amidst the marsh and mire of that tempting spot.

On the following evening we were entertained at a banquet, as the guests of the Maharaja, in the Ranbir Bagh. It is a palace, or hall of entertainment, which stands on a high masonry plinth, and forms a square block with open verandahs all round; and is covered with one of those airy roofs which, in the manner peculiar to this country, slope up from all sides to a central point, there to be topped by another of miniature proportions. It has been recently built in the Kashmir style of architecture, and occupies a prominent isolated position on the river bank above the city, and opposite the quarters allotted for the residence of European visitors, and is furnished in the Indo-European fashion. In front of it, and on either side, is a fine turf promenade supported against the river by a masonry embankment which is ascended from the stream by a substantial flight of stone steps. And in rear, beyond a high bank of turf, is a spacious garden laid out, after our fashion, with fruit-trees, ornamental shrubs, and flowering plants.

On this occasion a company of infantry, and a military

band were drawn up on the embankment from the landing-steps to the verandah in which the Maharaja received his guests. Here, as throughout the building, the floor was carpeted with a sheeting of snow-white calico, which answered well to counteract the dull reflection from the walls highly embellished with the minute patterns of the Kashmir style of decoration. We found His Highness and his two youngest sons—pretty and intelligent children—seated at the upper part of the hall with the Resident and some officers who were visitors in the valley, and his court officers standing in attendance behind him. So approaching to pay our respects, we found seats on the chairs reserved for us on either side to witness the *nâch* which was to beguile the half-hour before dinner—the grace allowed the unpunctual ones to join the feast.

A troupe of twelve or fourteen dancing girls—the celebrated beauties of Kashmir—attended by their torch-bearers, now made their appearance at the top of the verandah steps, and with one accord saluting the Maharaja, quietly seated themselves in a semicircle opposite to us on the floor at the lower end of the hall. From this they rose two and two in turn, and reciting and singing and dancing, slowly worked their way up to where our host was seated; then saluting, they retired, as gracefully as they had advanced, to make way for the next pair, and so on. I will not attempt to describe this, by us much abused, performance, for want of appropriate words; because the terms "reciting and singing and dancing," which, in default of better, I have used above, do not convey to our ideas a true representation of what they are meant to explain.

Whatever the faults of each, and however unsuited to our tastes, these accomplishments are none the less

appreciated by those amongst whom they flourish, and by whom they are exhibited for our entertainment. Besides, apart from the divergence of taste in these respects, the performance, judged on its own merits, is not altogether unworthy of commendation; particularly if set in comparison with the spectacles presented so often on our own stage where the ballet is in vogue. With the "bayadere" of Kashmir there is no studied indelicacy of dress, any more than there is *abandon* in the graceful movements of her limbs. These (the graceful movements) are only acquired by long practice and careful training, and to be judged fairly must be viewed with an unprejudiced eye. For the dance of the Kashmir bayadere as she sails over the floor with those graceful evolutions of the arms and body which attract the eye more than that almost imperceptible movement of the feet—only recognised by the jingling of the ankle bells—is quite a different sight from the fling one sees on the stage, or the performances we go through in the ball-room; though each may be appropriate in its own sphere.

After two or three rounds had been gone through dinner was announced, and the Maharaja rising conducted the Resident and Colonel Gordon by either hand to the table, and then retired through a side-door to join Mirza Fazlullah Khan, the Persian Consul General of Bombay, who, happening to be on a tour in the valley, was one of his guests; whilst the rest of us, following the first lead, ranged ourselves on either side of the board, and in the absence of our host did free justice to the good things provided.

The dinner was served entirely after our own fashion, excepting only the absence of our host from the head of his own table, in deference to an absurd prejudice the natives of India obstinately adhere to. This unjustifiable

refusal to eat with us is the great stumbling-block in the way of that social intercourse which we strive to cultivate with our native fellow-subjects, and will never be removed until the native princes send their sons to be educated in English colleges, where they may learn how to associate with us on equal terms.

As it was, the Resident presided, and at the proper time rose to propose the usual toasts—"The Queen" and "The Viceroy." Each in turn was duly responded to, and then Colonel Gordon proposed "The Maharaja," which was received in like manner, all standing. As each toast was drunk, the band, which had been treating us to a variety of music during the meal, struck up "God save the Queen." On the conclusion of the last repetition his Highness acknowledged the compliment in set form through Diwan Kirpa Ram, and then the company rejoined the party in the verandah, where the *nách* was continued. In the midst of its performance was heard the squeak of a bagpipe, to the no small astonishment of those who were not in the secret of his coming; and following it appeared our camp sergeant and piper stepping it gaily up the hall to where we were seated. He saluted the Maharaja, and then by his request gave us a performance. His appearance was splendid and, as in its handsome garb his well set-up form paced solidly up and down the hall, we could not but proudly admire all he represented.

His presence in such a scene was, nevertheless, totally out of place, and even more absurd than our dining without our host; for it sadly discomfited the fair Kashmiris, whose countenances, instead of curious glances of admiration, depicted only the disgust with which the intrusion filled their hearts. Even the Maharaja, with all his determination to please, could not divest his

features of the gloom our friend's Gaelic airs had cast upon them, and signalised his pleasure at their cessation, I trow, more likely than out of compliment to us, by ordering a handsome shawl and a purse of gold to be given to the performer.

On our return journey from this entertainment we found the sluice gates of the Dall closed to prevent the rising flood of waters entering; otherwise the garden plots before mentioned as covering the marshy tract between the river and the lake would have been destroyed by the inundation. We consequently walked across the embankment, and proceeded to camp in a boat which had been thoughtfully provided for us on the other side. It was nearly midnight when we reached camp, glad to have done with the passage by the water way, and escape its damp chills and heavy mephitic odours.

On the 10th we attended one of those military reviews of the Kashmir troops which the Maharaja holds weekly here, on the parade in rear of the Sher Garhi, when residing in this summer capital. We met his Highness as he issued from the gate of the fort, and, accompanying his unostentatious cavalcade, rode down the line paraded for inspection; and then, turning off to the saluting point, were provided with chairs on the platform from which he viewed the evolutions of his army.

There were about four thousand infantry, two hundred cavalry, and fifty or sixty wall pieces the size of camel guns upon the ground. The men were equipped in uniform similar to that of the Indian army, though their arms were decidedly inferior, and the men themselves evidently not selected on the merits of physical efficiency. They were, however, on the whole, a light-limbed, active body of men, generally well set-up; and they marched with creditable regularity. Dogras and Sikhs, amongst whom

were interspersed some Pathans and Hindustanis, composed the chief constituents of the force, and a battalion of Baltis, in the extraordinary bonnets and jaunty petticoats (which display below the knee the neat folds of their leg-bands) of their national garb, formed its most interesting and curious feature.

After the manœuvres the force marched past the platform, in front of which their bands had been massed, and took the routes to their different quarters. The Maharaja evinced no keen interest in the spectacle, but, referring to the services his troops had shared in during the mutiny, pointed to them as but a contingent of the Indian army which held these hills as part of the British Empire for the Empress of India, and as at all times ready for the service of the state.

It was originally intended that our camp should halt here for eight or ten days to provide our men and cattle with the warm clothing requisite on the march across the passes, as well as to effect certain changes in our camp-establishment, and alterations and improvements in our mule gear and tent equipage, which the march from Murree had rendered advisable. Our wants in these respects had been promptly attended to by the Kashmir officials who, for the sake of convenience and expedition —for the city was five miles distant by road—had established a temporary bazar under the trees in the immediate vicinity of our camp, so that the tailoring, cobbling, carpentry and smith-work, &c., required by our party, were at once executed under direct supervision in the booths and workshops that had sprung up around us; and accordingly on the 14th August I accompanied Colonel Gordon on a farewell visit to the Maharaja to thank him for his attentions to our party, and acknowledge the punctuality and assiduity of his officials.

On the eve of our departure, however, orders were received from our chief at Simla directing the halt of the camp here till his arrival on the 29th of the month. The march was consequently postponed, and we devoted the interval to perfecting the arrangements which had already been made. But the time hung heavily, and the fortnight proved a weary one amidst the fevers and the musquitos of the spot—which, after all, was the best site for our purpose the locality afforded. Not even the interest of lessons in Turki, nor the diversion of shooting grebe, coots, and water-pheasants amongst the reeds and weeds of the lake, nor yet the ridiculous rumours gossip brought us from the city, sufficed to enliven our stay amidst such pests; and finally, when our chief did arrive, the order to march was hailed with joy by us all, only too glad to change our forced inactivity in the alluring shades of Nasim Bagh and its fever poison for the excitements of the road and the pure air of the mountains.

Prior to our departure from Murree I had been fortunate enough to secure as one of my personal servants a native of Yarkand who, in 1868, had left his home to make the pilgrimage to Mecca by way of India. His history was a very remarkable one, and may be taken as a type of that of many another who sets out from his remote home in Central Asia to brave the vicissitudes and dangers by land and sea of a journey of which he has no conception other than that it is somehow to carry him to that sacred spot which holds so mysterious a sway over the Muslim mind.

Haji Casim—such was my hero's name—was the son of a baker who kept a shop in one of the principal thoroughfares of Yarkand city. He did a flourishing trade under the rule of the Chinese till the Tungani rebellion,

filling the streets with bloodshed, violence, and plunder, necessitated his closing his business and secreting himself and family for very life in the store vaults and cellars under his tenement. The father died during these troubles, and on their subsidence the widow with her children, emerging from their lurking, re-opened the shop. And Casim now worked the business with his mother, and was a witness of all those eventful changes which the city underwent till it was finally taken by Atalik Ghazi.

On the restoration of order, and the revival of Islam under the new rule, he took advantage of the favouring opportunity, and with some four or five other members of the family, leaving his mother to mind the shop, joined a caravan of pilgrims who were setting out for Kashmir, on the long journey they were bound, in company with a party despatched by the successful conqueror with presents for the holy shrine at Mecca.

He and his companions set out on their unconsidered wanderings with what few necessaries their humble state allowed of their collecting laden on three ponies, which also served to alleviate from time to time the fatigues of their weary march. They had, besides, a joint sum of money, hardly exceeding five pounds of our money, to meet the expenses of a journey of as many thousand miles.

By the time they reached Leh two of their three ponies had succumbed to the hardships of the road, and their carcases were left to desiccate and bleach with the thousands of others which mark the traveller's track across those terrible Tibat highlands. Whilst the other proved such an expense in a country where money was the medium of exchange, and in a land where there was no free pasture, that he was sold to avoid threatened bank-

ruptcy, and, instead thereof, to increase their slender means. With their small stock of money thus nearly doubled, the party made their way to Srinaggar, and thence through the Panjab to Bombay, where they embarked in a native pilgrim boat with a crowd of others for one of the Arab ports.

Our Haji's account of his adventures and losses is too long and confused, from his ignorance of the names of many of the places on the route followed, for profitable insertion here. Let it suffice for us to know that he did get to Mecca, and piously performed the prescribed rites there; that he somehow found himself in Constantinople, and somehow returned thence to Lahore, a veritable pilgrim, a lonely, friendless stranger. His aunt had died in one place, her daughter had disappeared at another, his brother was lost somewhere else, and finally he and his cousin, of about his own age, lost sight of each other in the maze of some great Indian city, and neither knows the other's fate, or did not up to July last year.

The troubles and perplexities of this doomed little band appear to have commenced at Leh, and tracked their steps in all their perilous wanderings. In one place they were cheated of their money by knaves, in another they were fed by the charity of the pious, and more often they earned their living and worked their way by odd jobs here and there.

From Lahore Haji Casim found his way to Leh as a mule-driver in the train of a Panjabi merchant; and, arrived here, he was stopped short at the threshold of his own home by a singular accident. He fell ill by exposure on the march, and applied for relief at the Charitable Dispensary established here by the British Government in connection with the office of the Joint Commissioner. The Hospital assistant, Khuda Bakhsh,

took an interest in the forlorn stranger, and after his recovery provided for him as a domestic servant in his own family.

Khuda Bakhsh subsequently abandoned the profession for more profitable employment in the Commissariat Department, and hearing of my want, obligingly placed the Haji at my service with the view to his visiting his home.

During our stay at Srinaggar, with the aid of my books, I found him a very useful assistant in picking up some acquaintance with the language of his country; whilst, in Kasghar, his services were freely in requisition by most of us. His sudden rise to such prosperity and importance led him into some extravagancies—not the least of them marrying a wife and treating her friends to a succession of feasts. But this may be passed as excusable, since he considered it his duty to maintain the dignity of his position as a servant in the Embassy, and in no way detracts from his merits as an intelligent and trustworthy guide. He accompanied me back to Srinaggar, and there meeting Mr Shaw's party going up to Kashghar, he resigned my service to return with his camp to the bride he had left behind him.

CHAPTER III.

THE monotony of our last day's stay at Nasim Bagh was agreeably interrupted on the 25th August by a visit to the Maharaja's silk filature. It is an extensive establishment in the vicinity of the Sher Garhi, and gives employment to 400 men, though, as we were informed, there is work enough for four times the number. Babu Nilambar Dey Mukarji, who has the management of the concern, accompanied us over the establishment, and very obligingly explained the entire process of sericulture.

The industry, it appears, has only been introduced here during the last two or three years on the system in vogue in Bengal, and from the results already achieved, promises soon to be a productive source of wealth for this country, so as in some measure to compensate for the decline of the shawl trade in this ancient seat of its prosperity.

The spinning-wheels we saw here were worked by hand, but at the larger filature at Raghonathpur, on the shore of the Dall, we were told they are worked by water power. The silk appeared to be of remarkably good quality, with a soft and fine fibre, and, from a correspondence on the subject shown to us, some samples which had been sent to London were pronounced by Messrs Durant and Co. as worth from twenty-three to twenty-four shillings the pound. The outturn of silk last year is estimated at two lakhs of rupees, of which

ninety-five thousand are reckoned as profit. For the same period twenty maunds or 1600 pounds of eggs were stored for breeding. One ounce of eggs produces, it is said, forty thousand worms. And these produce 120 ounces of silk. We saw the silk reeled in one part of the establishment being woven into lengths in another by the ordinary hand-loom, and were shown some samples of a new fabric for the production of which experiments were still in course of progress. They were a combination of shawl-wool and silk, and seemed durable and warm, but felt stiff and rough.

From the silk filature we went to the Maharaja's Charitable Dispensary, which stands in a very good position on the river bank, and is under the charge of Dr Gopal Dass, formerly a sub-assistant surgeon on the Indian Establishment, who kindly conducted us over it.

The institution is managed entirely on European principles, as in our own establishments of the same kind, and is a great boon to the people on whom, in a quiet, unobserved way, it confers unknown benefits. Amongst the patients we saw a case of amputation of the thigh, and another of the leg, both of which were well advanced towards recovery. The records showed that twenty-two other surgical operations of an important nature, including three of lithotomy, had been performed here during the current year, and all successfully, except one of the lithotomy cases which terminated fatally. The charity is worthy of every support and encouragement, yet it is rarely visited by the Maharaja or his court officials, though in justice it must be recorded that it is amply provided with European medicines and surgical instruments by him.

On the appointed day—the 29th August—a salute

fired at Srinaggar warned us of the arrival of our chief. We accordingly donned our uniform, and hastened to the Residency to welcome him, and pay our respects, and were glad to find him none the worse for his rapid ride from Murree.

On the next day Mr Forsyth, attended by his staff, paid a ceremonial visit to the Maharaja, which his Highness returned on the following morning. A spacious tent and *Sháhmiyána*, or "king in the centre" awning, had been prepared for the reception on the turfy bank overlooking the Dall; and the slope from the landing up to the tent had been laid with a strip of white calico, on either side of which were ranged our guard of "Guides" to do the honours. Captain Chapman went down to the palace to escort his Highness who, on arrival, was received at the landing by Colonel Gordon and myself, and conducted to the tent, where he was welcomed by the Envoy and Plenipotentiary, under a salute from the guard, and a skirl on the pipes by Sergeant Rhind.

The Maharaja—his eldest son, Miyan Partab Sing, being prevented by indisposition—was accompanied by his two younger sons, Ram Sing and Ammar Sing, aged ten and eleven years respectively, and was attended by Diwan Kirpa Ram, and eight or ten other principal officers of his court. The ceremony passed off with the usual formalities and courtesies, and our visitors on departure went to spend the day in the cool retreat of the Nishat Bagh, or "garden of delight," on the further shore of the Dall.

On the following evening the Embassy was entertained by the Maharaja at a banquet in the Ranbir Bagh. The guests included the European community at the time in the place, and the feast was graced by the

presence of ladies. The assembly was one for the usual toasts and speeches proper to the occasion, and concluded with a handsome acknowledgment by the Envoy of the kindness and hospitality of our princely host.

With this parting proof of friendship terminated our month's halt at Srinaggar, and on the following morning —the 3rd September—our camp broke ground, and marched to Gandarbal, at the entrance to the Sind valley, where we camped under the shade of some magnificent plane trees such as are only to be found in this country. It is the first village we have come to in the district of Lar (which extends from Manasbal to Sona Marg, and is said to contain a hundred villages and hamlets, few of which, however, contain as many as thirty houses), and on this occasion presented a bustle of activity such as it seldom witnesses.

Our own camp comprised 103 mules of the fixed establishment, and nearly as many camp followers of sorts. And we employed, besides, eighty-seven hired ponies, and two or three score of coolies. We were all closely packed on the side of the road, between the village and the ridge at the foot of which it lies; for the land beyond spreads on to the Kashmir plain in a wide stretch of rice swamp and reed marsh, which extends away to the Manasbal lake.

Around us were grouped, in picturesque disorder, the tents of our Kashmir attendants, and the piles of provisions they had collected for our use; whilst a stream of coolies and baggage-ponies continued through the day to file past, on their way to the stages ahead. The complimentary speech of the Envoy on the preceding evening had evidently flattered the vanity of our good friends, and stimulated their exertions on our behalf; and their service, here renewed, smoothed our way,

stage by stage, till in due course we passed to the protection of our Kashghar allies.

At a mile or two beyond Gandarbal is the village of Arr, on the bank of a small stream, of the same name, which empties into the Dall at Telbal.* It has some paper-mills, worked by water-power, the sound of whose pounders at work reached our camp. The fibre of the wild hemp plant, which grows here in abundance, is the material used, mixed up with old rags, &c. The pulp is merely mashed and washed here, and then conveyed to the city to be made into paper. Another plant which grows in abundance here, and much more plentifully in the Kashmir valley, is the *krishun*, a species of iris lily, the leaves of which are used for making ropes.

The evening closed here with the side-eddies of a storm of thunder and lightning, which swept across the plain from west to east, but caused us no further commotion than a securing of pegs and trenching of tent walls in anticipation of the threatened downpour.

From Gandarbal we marched to Kangan, twelve miles, and camped in a grove of walnut and plane trees near a silkworm nursery. The route at first winds amongst cultivated fields and orchards to the homesteads of Nunar, and further on leads across a high shelf of land which drops precipitously to the bed of the Sind river. We here crossed the stream on a ricketty bridge of long fir poles which were stretched across between two piers built up of loose boulders at the edges of the current, and floored with cross bars of rough split logs. By another similar bridge, beyond the homesteads of Palang, we crossed a tributary stream coming down from the Harmukh mountain, and then following up the course of the main river reached Kangan.

After the storm last night, the morning broke with a

clear, sunny sky; and, as we passed up the valley, we saw its beautiful scenery to the best advantage—woodland and mountain alike radiant in verdure refreshed by recent showers. Vegetation is luxuriant everywhere, and quite conceals from view the little farmsteads scattered along the hill skirt.

The umbrageous walnut and mulberry clustered about them hardly attract attention amongst the general growth of apricot, plum, and apple trees which overspread the surface, and conceal from view the little plots of rice and millets and vetches, or the narrow strips of amaranth and buckwheat, which, more than the self-growing fruit-trees, are the cultivator's care.

The two last constitute an important item of the winter diet of the peasant here. The amaranth seed is consumed in the form of porridge boiled with milk, and is considered a warm and nourishing food. The other is roasted and ground to flour, and then baked in thick cakes mixed with walnut or apricot oil, which in this country are in common use for domestic and culinary purposes.

Evening closed at Kangan with a storm of thunder and lightning on the hills around; and next morning, as we followed our path to Gund, a few stray clouds overhead showered their contents upon us, and then, withdrawing to the hill tops, disclosed to our view the glorious scene we were marching through.

As we proceeded up the winding course of its stream, the hills on either side closed in upon the channel of the Sind river in long slopes of pine and cedar forest which terminate only at its edges. Bright, grassy glades opened vistas through the mass of sombre forest, the generally dull hue of which was agreeably lighted here and there by foliage of varied form and colour; whilst rifts in the overtopping clouds now and again favoured us with

transient glimpses of rugged peaks projecting against the sky, of stupendous banks of bare rock marking the limit of vegetation, and of snow-clad mountain summits forming the junction of radiating spurs.

The air was delightfully fresh and perfumed with the honied scent of a multitude of wild flowers, amongst which the familiar meadow-sweet claimed welcome recognition from its abundance. Our men and cattle partook of its enlivening benefits, and showed by their merry song and buoyant steps that they had already recovered from the fevers and lassitudes of our Srinaggar halt. On our way we passed the village of Terewán, with Háyan on the opposite side of the river, and four miles on came to Hári, with Ganjawán on the other bank. A little further on we crossed the river by a bridge similar to those between Gandarbal and Kangan, and, passing through a wood, crossed some cultivated fields to Sumbal, and beyond the village recrossed the river by a bridge, the span of which is, I think, greater than that of any other we saw on this route. At all events, the vibration was greater and the undulation of the poles unsteadied one's gait in an uncomfortable manner.

From Gandarbal up to the Nubra valley all these bridges are exactly alike, and consist merely of two or three long fir trunks stretched across between buttress piers of loose boulders built upon either edge of the torrent, and laid above with cross pieces of rough split log. They are called *Sanga*, and seldom have any side railing. They are only safe to cross on foot, owing to the unsteady motion of the poles being apt to make a horse restive. Laden cattle, too, should only cross one at a time.

Beyond the Sumbal bridge we passed through a strip of terraced cultivation to Práo, and two or three miles further on halted for breakfast a little way short of

Gund, where our camp, going on, was pitched on a ledge overlooking the river—distance fifteen miles. The route traversed up to this point, and, indeed, up to Rezin, eight miles further on, is a prosperous though not very populous tract. The peasantry appeared to be comfortably off, and their farmsteads well stocked with kine, ponies, sheep, and goats. In most of the villages the bee is hived, and at Práo we were presented with a fresh honeycomb for our breakfast.

From Gund we marched to Shat Gari, fifteen miles. For the first three miles, up to Revil, the road is difficult, and leads across a steep hill slope in parts of which it is built up against the side of a vertical wall of rock. Beyond Revil—which is a small cluster of farmsteads embowered amidst splendid walnut trees very picturesquely grouped together at the entrance of the Gúmbur glen, winding up amongst wild hills to the northward—it passes over a considerable stretch of cultivation which slopes down to the river in a succession of terraces, and conducts to the village of Kulan. Here it crosses the river and traverses the flat reach on which stand the homesteads of Gwipara and Rezin; beyond these it recrosses to Gaganger, where we breakfasted under the shade of its walnut trees.

Onwards from this the road becomes difficult, and lies for about four miles, with numerous ascents and descents *en route*, along the foot of precipitous cliffs which wear a singularly wild aspect. Rugged ridges top the hills and shoot up in sharp peaks against the sky; whilst the thinning forests on the lower slopes barely hide the nakedness of their rocks. In many parts the path was obstructed by the *débris* of slate and sandstone which had fallen from the slopes above, and several loads were thrown in the passage of these obstructions. We were,

however, well supplied with coolies to meet such contingencies, and no loss or delay occurred. On our return journey this way, the following year, we found this road, which is called Hang Sattu, had been repaired and made easy. Beyond it we crossed the river, and camped on a flowery meadow lying along its bank, under the shadow of a forest-covered ridge which concealed from our view much of the magnificent scenery of the locality.

At Shat Gari the valley branches off in different directions, and forms an amphitheatre in the hills. Its undulating surface is covered with a profuse growth of flowering plants, and its surroundings present some of the finest scenery to be found in Kashmir—mountains and glaciers, forest slopes and pasture meadows, with sparkling torrents and gloomy defiles being all combined in one landscape. Shat Gari, the village of eight or ten houses near which we are camped, is said to signify "The seven hills," from the number of peaks that enclose its basin which is more commonly called Sona Marg, or "The golden meadow," from the flowery slopes at its further end, where is the village of that name.

The rise in this march is considerable. I made it 1848 feet by the difference in the boiling point of water, which gave the elevation at Shat Gari as 8506 feet. The change in climate and difference in temperature, too, were very sensible; the *maxima* and *minima* being 78° Fah. and 45° Fah. respectively, against 83° Fah. and 53° Fah. on the last day of our stay at Nasim Bagh.

This is a favourite summer resort of tourists in Kashmir, and the hills around contain the hunting-grounds of the sportsman. The stag, or *barasing*, ranges their forests and feeds on the grassy glades that break their thick shades; the ibex, or *kel*, disports himself on their inaccessible crags, and roams the pastures on their loftiest

slopes, where the wild goat, or *márkhor*, keeps him company, and divides the dominion; and the brown bear, or *háputs*, lurks in the gullies and ravines; whilst the monal pheasant hides his bright plumage in the favouring foliage of the woods he inhabits; and the snow pheasant mixes his less attractive colours with the similar hues of the rocks he lives amongst. In winter this region is deeply covered with snow, and then the few houses, which here constitute the last signs of habitation in this direction, are deserted by their tenants, excepting such as are retained here by the governor for the purpose of keeping open the communication with the country beyond.

From Shat Gari we marched across Sona Marg and, crossing the river above the village, followed up its course to Baltal—"The foot of the pass"—where we camped near some log huts which are used as a post stage and shelter for travellers. Distance twelve miles. The Sind river is here joined by a considerable tributary which flows through a picturesque gorge that winds down from the south-east, whilst the main stream coming down from the north-east, and which appears the smaller of the two, is lost to view in the dark, deep chasm of the Zojibal a little way ahead. Vegetation here—which is the limit of its luxuriance in this direction—is very profuse, particularly in pasture and flowering plants. I collected the seeds of several different kinds, which, with others gathered at various stages on our route, I sent to Dr Hooker at Kew, and Mr Anderson Henry at Edinburgh.

I remembered this was the spot indicated to me as the natural home of the *kút* or "costum," by the carriers we met on the march to Srinaggar, but searched the vicinity of the camp in vain for the plant. Nor could I find amongst the crowd of coolies about us any one who even

knew the name. They were for the most part strangers to the locality, having been collected here from distant parts of the district for the service of this special occasion; and though they could not help me themselves, one of them got me a native of the locality from the post huts hard by, who brought me in some specimens from a hill a few miles off.

Our next stage was to Matáyan. Marching next day—the 7th September—from Baltal, we crossed the Zojibal pass, and shortly after passed from the territory of Kashmir proper to that of Tibat. We left behind us a beautiful country, luxuriant in vegetation ever fresh in the moist atmosphere of its climate, and entered a region in the dry air of which no tree and no herb flourished away from the banks of its rivers and water-courses. We lost the varied and picturesque scenery of limestones and sandstones, with their always pleasing landscapes of woodland and pasture, and found instead the dreary wastes and wilds of schists and shales, of granites and gneiss rocks, with their interminable monotony of desolation, only varied by repetition of inhospitable glacier. And we parted from a well-favoured people who present, in their comely features and robust frames, one of the purest forms of that diversified family of the Caucasian race—the Aryan; and we met another who as distinctly bear all the typical characters of that great branch of the Mongol stock—the Tatar. And with the change we passed from one set of dialects to another—from Aryan to Turanian; and from professors of one religion to those of another—from the Musalman to the Budhist. And, finally, on passing from one region to the other we came upon new manners and dresses, different plants and different animals. We found polyandry in place of polygamy, and the bonnet in place of the turban. We found a pasture

of peculiar herbs in place of the common grasses. And we found the grunting ox and hybrids in place of the familiar bullock and kine. The limit between these two regions of such opposite characters is the watershed of the Sind and Dras rivers, which trickle away from it west and east respectively. It is an almost imperceptible saddle-shaped elevation running across the narrow col about five miles beyond the pass; and, though we found only a few scattered wreaths lying under the shade of its sides, it is for eight months of the year buried deeply under snow.

The pass itself, however, is the great object of attention here, as it forms the most serious obstacle in the way of uninterrupted communication with the regions to the north. It is called Zoji-la by the Tibetans, and Zoji-bál by the Kashmiris. The terminal syllable, in the language of each respectively, signifies "hill pass," and the proper name is a corruption of Shivaji or Sheoji, one of the three great Hindu deities.

The pass is closed to traffic during nearly half the year, and is entirely impassable except to post couriers, and then at peril, during two months. The Envoy of Atalik Ghazi crossed this pass last December with extreme difficulty, and lost, so I was informed here, eleven of the coolies of his convoy, who perished in a snow-drift. It is crossed by two roads; one of these follows up the bed of the river, and passes over the blocks of ice and snow-drift which block the narrow gorge or gap through which it flows; and the other winds up the steep slope of the hill rising above this gap to the north. The first is seldom used owing to its dangers, and is only practicable to footmen; the other is a very fair road, and is kept in repair by the Kashmir authorities.

We followed the latter route, and at the summit of the

pass found the elevation by the boiling point of water to be about 11,400 feet above the sea, and 2118 feet above Baltal. The path is very steep and zigzag up the face of a high cliff which forms one side of the gorge. Our long file of mules got over very well, and without further loss than that of two casks of mess liquor, which went over the side, and were only picked up in the bed of the river below, where, through their stoved-in sides, the limpid waters of the Sind river quickly replaced the Scotch whisky and French brandy which were to have served us through the winter. The descent on the other side is easy, and leads down to the river channel above where it narrows and drops suddenly in the gorge. We crossed to the opposite bank over a mass of hard impacted snow which sloped steeply to the gorge.

This pass is of historical interest as being the spot at which the Yarkand troops of Sultan Saíd, in 1531 A.D., defeated its defenders. The circumstance is recorded by the principal actor in the enterprise—Mirza Muhammad Hydar—in his history of the Mughal Khans of Kashghar. He wrote his book in the "city of Kashmir," or Srinaggar, in 1544 A.D., and entitled it Tárikhi Rashidi or "The Annals of Rashid," who was the reigning Khan of Kashghar at that time. During our stay in the country I obtained a good copy of this book, and from its pages have derived several interesting historical memorials connected with different parts of the route we traversed. In his account of this campaign, which was undertaken as a *ghaza* or "crescentade" against the infidels of Tibat, Sultan Saíd set out from Yarkand in the last month of the Muhammadan year 938, corresponding with April or May of our year 1531, with an army of 5000 men, and crossing the Caracoram, came upon his enemies' first settlements in the Nubra valley. His force marched in

two divisions, one of which—under the joint command of his son Iskandar, and his minister Mirza Hydar—proceeded some days in advance, whilst the other under command of Saíd himself followed in rear.

Sultan Saíd suffered so severely from difficulty of breathing in the passage of the highlands—on which he subsequently died—that his officers, alarmed for his safety, hurried him off to the lower valleys, and despatched messengers to warn Mirza Hydar of the king's distress. The first division had advanced in their victorious career as far as Maryol or Ladakh when they were overtaken by this intelligence; and Mirza Hydar, immediately retracing his steps, joined his master in Nubra, where he found that the sufferer had quite recovered from his troubles on passing out of the sphere of the causes which produced them.

After this the invaders spent four or five months in active guerilla with the inhabitants, and overran their thinly peopled valleys, plundering, slaughtering, captivating, and converting till they had devastated the whole country. Winter was now approaching, and it was discovered that the country was incapable of supporting their numbers until the return of spring should enable them to retrace their steps across the passes.

It was consequently decided to divide their force, and seek winter quarters elsewhere. Sultan Saíd with one thousand men penetrated into the Balti country, which is described as situated between Badakhshan and Bolor, and was received as a guest by its chief, one Bahram Toç. He and his people, it would seem, were Musalmans—probably of the heretic *Shia* sect; for the Yarkandis—of the orthodox *Sunni* creed—treated them in a very unbrotherly fashion, and abused their host's hospitality by turning his subjects out of their houses, killing

the men, enslaving the women and appropriating their chattels.

Mirza Hydar, with the youthful Iskandar and the other four thousand of the force, minus a small detachment left in Nubra, set out to make their way into Kashmir. They arrived at the Zojibal pass about November or December and found it deep in snow, and defended by four hundred of the enemy—apparently people of Dras. These, however, were soon put to flight by the overwhelming number of their assailants, and the Yarkandis, hurrying on, reached Srinaggar on the second evening, camping only one night midway; thus fighting a battle, and marching at least seventy miles within the space of forty-eight hours.

At Srinaggar they were hospitably received by the king, one Muhammad Shah, who enlivened the monotony of the winter months by celebrating a marriage between his daughter and the Yarkand prince.

In the ensuing spring the crescentaders issued from their respective retreats. The rigours of the winter in Balti, it would seem, somewhat chilled the fervour of Sultan Saíd's religious zeal, for he set out forthwith to return to his capital. On reaching the elevated plateaux he was again seized with his former ailment, and, though hurried on by double stages towards the place where the difficulty of breathing or *dam* is known to cease, he expired midway, only a few miles from the Caracoram pass, just twelve months after he had set out on this ill-fated expedition.

On his departure from Nubra Saíd had ordered Mirza Hydar to prosecute the *ghaza*, and carry the victorious banner of Islam into the very metropolis of the infidels —to Aorsang, or Ouchang, or Hlassa itself—consequently the Kashmir division set out from Maryol on the enter-

prise without delay, as the goal of their ambition was distant a journey of two months. The force endured incredible sufferings and losses from cold, privation, and effects of altitude, and after wandering about for two months were compelled to retreat on Maryol before they had accomplished half the distance to their destination. They now learned of the death of Saíd, of the revolution in Kashghar, and the accession to the throne of his eldest son, Sultan Rashíd, by the murder of Mirza Hydar's uncle, Sayyid Muhammad Khan—who had seized on the government in favour of Iskandar—and of the recall of Iskandar with the army, and of the proscription of Mirza Hydar. The winter was now setting in, and the joint commanders decided on sharing what fortune provided together. By deaths and desertions their force had been reduced to five hundred men. With these they seized the fort of Kalasiya or Calá Shiya, and in it held out till spring, subsisting on the ten thousand sheep they had captured on their way down. With the opening of the roads they invaded Rang Shigar, and after ravaging the country for two months finally returned to Maryol, where the remnant of the force dispersed to return as best they could to Yarkand. On the approach of the third winter Mirza Hydar and Iskandar, with their following reduced to fifty men, set out together to seek a safer retreat. By the time they reached the Caracoram their men were reduced to twenty-seven. Of these, four returned with Iskandar to Yarkand, and the rest followed Mirza Hydar on his venturesome journey by an unknown track through Ráshgam and Pamir to Badakhshan. And thus ended the Yarkand invasion of Tibat in 1531—the first and last from that direction of which we have any record.

To resume the narrative of our march, whence we

digressed for this historical memorandum. After crossing the Zoji La to the opposite bank of the river-bed the path follows up its course to the water-shed, the elevation of which is, by hypsometric observation, 11,300 feet. Beyond it the route passes down the "col," along the gradually growing stream of the Dras river, and over a moorland covered with turf and peat beds down to a tributary from a glacier close on the right. We here first came upon the marmots for which this locality is famous. Further on the road, crossing other tributaries, conducts to Matáyan. Distance 14 miles. There are no trees here, but there is a good deal of cultivation, mostly barley, on the long strip of alluvium which here forms the valley. The change in climate and scene is sudden and complete. The birch and willow, with some juniper, soon cease beyond the water-shed, and then the hills assume that dreary, bare, treeless aspect which is their character throughout the rest of our journey. The air too is sensibly drier and lighter, whilst the change in physiognomy, dress, and language are no less strange. Dras, 13 miles, was our next stage. It is a collection of half-a-dozen hamlets dispersed over the inequalities of a spacious basin in these close set hills, and forms the capital of the Dras district which extends from Zojila to Channagund. In the centre of the basin is a small square fort with a garrison of fifty men, and adjoining it is the *tahsil* or "collectorate" of the governor of the district. It overlooks a garden surrounded by poplar and willow plantations, whose fresh foliage met the eye agreeably in the midst of the general poverty of the scene, and afforded us a welcome shelter from the sun's rays which here possess an unexpected power, exemplified amongst our party by several cases of ephemeral fever and headache. The elevation of Dras is about

10,150 feet, and snow lies on the ground for two to three months in winter, to the depth of a foot or more. Sometimes it lies for weeks together to a depth of three or four feet, and completely closes the route through this valley. Further on its usual depth diminishes to a few inches at Kargil. Our route led down the narrow winding valley of the Dras river, to whose banks the hills slope direct in a succession of bare uninviting rock, and presented no objects of interest except, perhaps, the prangos—called by the natives *prangóz*—which we here first met, and the river-bed itself which—where we crossed it by bridge—half a mile below the village of Pandras, forms a narrow, furrowed, and scooped channel over an outcropping stratum of green serpentine. It extends for some miles till the river enters the Dras basin. Here we crossed it again to reach our camp ground by one of those log bridges common to this country, and which, for us, had a melancholy interest as the unsteady support from which Mr Cowie—an English gentleman travelling in these parts some six or eight years ago—fell into the river whilst crossing on horseback, and was drowned.

On the march we met some small parties of coolies carrying tea on its way to Srinnagar. The loads were packed in oblong bundles sewed up in sheepskins, and were carried on the back in a sort of wooden saddle worn like a knapsack. The porter carried in his hand a T-shaped stick, on which now and again he supported his burthen to take rest and recover breath. The tea came from Hlassa, and had been conveyed stage by stage on the backs of different sets of coolies, each set only carrying across the limit of their own district. At Dras most of the cattle and coolies provided for our camp by the Kashmir authorities were changed. The ponies were hardy, sure-footed, and active little animals, and in our

subsequent experience proved excellent baggagers; whilst, as for the Tatar coolies, in patient endurance, cheerful service, and few wants, they bear away the palm from all of their class. But their merits are best appreciated at a respectable distance, for they are the least washed and most scented gentry anywhere to be met with.

The natives of this district are *Shíá* Musalmans professedly, but in physiognomy resemble the Tatars we come to further on, and with whom they consort freely. Their dress is a compromise between that of the Kashmiri and the Bhot, and but for the turban some of them wear they are not to be distinguished by the stranger from the Bhot, to whose speech their own assimilates. Their complexion, however, is generally fairer than that of the Bhot, and some of them show very distinct traces of intermixture with Kashmir blood. They seem, indeed, to be merely Muhammadanised Tatars forming the connecting link between the divergent Aryan and Turanian types. Few of them understand any but their own language, and they even have different names for their several villages and camping stages to those used for them by the Kashmiris. Thus they call Dras—Himbaps; Matáyan—Ambúti; Pandras—Pran, &c. And the coolies in our camp here amongst themselves spoke different dialects, according to the districts they came from, though they all seemed to understand each other pretty well. I commenced making a vocabulary, but found the diversity at each stage so great that I abandoned the task as hopeless. During our halt at Leh, however, I collected a few hundred words, and comparing them with those jotted down on the march found three distinct dialects of the same language were in use on the line of our route. The language of these Tatars—as are the people themselves—is called Bhot by the Kash-

miris. It is entirely different from the Kashmiri and its cognate dialects of Dardistan and Kafiristan, or of Badakhshan and Wakhan, and bears no resemblance to the Turki and Calmaghi spoken in Kashghar.

From Dras we marched to Thasgám—sixteen miles—and on quitting camp passed three stone pillars standing on the roadside. They were four or five feet high, and were sculptured with representations of Hindu gods. How they came here, or anything of their history, nobody could tell us. Our route followed the river course down a narrow winding valley with many hamlets and considerable cultivation on the small flats which occupied the turns of the stream from side to side. We observed many stacks of lucerne—here called *buksuk*, and at Leh *chhumpo*—and prangos piled in the roadside fields as winter fodder for the cattle of this country—the hybrid between the *yak (bos grunniens)* and the domestic cow, which is called *zho* and *zhámo* for the male and female respectively. There are several cross-breeds between the hybrid and the parent stocks, but they are not common nor so valued as the simple hybrid. The *zho* is very enduring and docile, and is preferred in the plough and under the load to the more hardy but restive *yak;* whilst the *zhámo* is said to give a more abundant and steady supply of milk than the common cow, and that on a limited and not very varied diet.

Our next march was a long and fatiguing one of twenty-two miles to Kargil, where we halted the 12th September. For the first two hours the route leads down the river course, which is here very narrow and rock-bound, and then, after crossing some rough ground, rises to a small flat on which stands the solitary police station of Kharbo. At a mile or two out of camp it crosses the river by a log bridge thrown across to an approaching

cliff. The passage round the rock to regain the road beyond is very narrow, and dangerous from its position on the brink of a precipice, at the foot of which surges the angry torrent of the river.

We found here, as at the many similar passages we subsequently crossed on our journey through this territory, a number of coolies stationed to assist our baggage train, and all were passed over without accident.

Beyond the police station we came to the ruined walls of some huts, which my guide told me marked the site of a hamlet formerly occupied by some gold-diggers who worked in the steep slope of the hill forming the opposite side of the river channel. They had run a gallery someway into the hill, and used to wash the auriferous soil in the river with profit till, one day the loose earth subsiding buried a number of their men, and the accident being looked on as an interposition of Providence, the enterprise was abandoned, and the colony dispersed.

From this we descended and ascended a succession of spurs abutting on the river, which on the opposite side receives the clear blue waters of the Shingo as a tributary to its own turbid stream, and rising up to the high bank of granite boulders on which Channagund—or, as the Tatars call it, Piliskimbo—stands, alighted for breakfast while the baggage filed past.

Resuming our route we came, at two or three miles, to the junction of the Thangskam river with that of Dras, and, mounting over a rough promontory of gneiss, followed up its course, leaving the Dras river away to our left, and after three miles of rough road came to Kargil. The opposite bank from the Dras river upwards is lined with villages which top the thin strips of fields and orchards built up in terraces from the river's brink, and extend all the way up to Powen opposite Kargil.

Between Channagund and Kargil there is neither cultivation nor habitation on the route we followed. The road is very rough and broken, and when we passed was crossed by the *débris* of two mud avalanches which had burst out from the gullies above after unusual rain some two months ago. One of them where it fell into the river was about 250 yards across, and in its descent—on the authority of my guide, a native of Kargil—swept away forty head of cattle and the three shepherds tending them.

Kargil is a very picturesque spot at the junction of the Surú and Paskyum or Wákhá rivers, whose united streams form the Thangskam. It is a considerable village spread over the well wooded slopes which overlook the noisy waters-meet below, and the flourishing cultivation of Powen on the opposite shore.

It is the capital of the district of the same name, which extends from the junction of the Thangskam with the Dras river to the Photola pass, and has a fort and collectorate. The latter is situated at the top of the village, and comprises some neat and commodious buildings, the shady terraces in front of which accommodated our camp.

The fort commands the road at the junction of the rivers, and is situated on an isolated boulder bed in the stream of the Surú river which rushes past on each side with ceaseless din. It communicates with the shore by most rickety bridges, supported in spans upon unstable-looking piles of boulder and brushwood.

Here we saw a grand collection of the people of the district, who had been assembled for the service of the camp, and found a strange mixture of Budhist and Musalman together, and apparently quite indifferent to the prejudices of creed which reign so supreme in the country we had left behind. Indeed, the country so far as we

have come on this side of Kashmir shows no monuments betokening the predominance or even the cultivation of either one religion or the other, and neither *masjid* and *ziarat*, nor *gonpa* and *chhorten* meet the eye to tell of Musalman or Budhist devotee. But in the crowd of seven or eight hundred men gathered about our camp the mixture of the two was very evident, and indicated the existence here of both creeds as on a neutral ground. The people are all alike called Bhot, though many amongst them are Musalmans of the despised heretic or *Shíá* sect; and they all present a very marked physiognomy of the Tatar type. I saw many faces which elsewhere would have been pronounced as Chinese.

In the afternoon of our halt here the people of the place got up a game of *polo* for our amusement, and more for their own. It is the national sport of this country, and every village has its level strip of polo ground carefully kept for the practice of this exercise. The display, however, we witnessed in the native home of the game was a poor affair compared with what one sees in the countries of its adoption. The keen zest and enjoyment of both horse and rider, however, made amends for the want of speed and dexterity which one sees exhibited amongst ourselves, and the clumsy horsemanship was covered by the merry good-nature and docility of the rider and his little steed.

On the conclusion of the game some of the men exhibited their equitation by picking a rupee off the ground whilst riding past without quitting the saddle. It was no great feat from the back of a pony no bigger than an English donkey, and whose pace was curbed to that of the proverbially obstinate creature to whose height I have compared his. The sport afforded a deal of merriment, however, amongst the crowd of spectators, owing to the

laughable efforts made by some, and the awkward tumbles of others in their eager efforts to clutch the prize; and was followed by a general scramble for handsful of coppers thrown amongst the crowd, a struggle which called forth a boisterous activity, wonderful to say, unmarred by a single jar of ill-temper.

Indeed, as our further acquaintance with them proved, these people possess a simplicity and geniality of disposition seldom to be met with, and are, according to their standard, a thriving and contented community. The crowd of them assembled here from all parts of the district were warmly clad and well nourished, and appeared generally comfortably off for men in their position.

It was here we first met the Tatar costume with which our subsequent journey made us more familiar. Most of the men wore the Bhot bonnet, or *tipi*, and carried a sheep or goatskin slung across the back. The bonnet is a mere bag of some strong woollen or goat's hair texture, and hangs jauntily on one side of the head which fills its opening, with the queue coiled in its interior or hanging down the back. For the Bhot wears his hair in the old style plaited into a tail, the length of which he is not too proud to increase by the artificial aid of braided wool. He is fond of ornament too, and decorates his bonnet with a bunch of flowers plucked from the weeds growing amongst his crops, or with the bright marigold which he patronises in the shelter of his homestead. He wears rings of gold or silver wire, strung with beads of red coral and green turquoise, in his ears, and carries a big boss of amber or agate suspended as a necklet charm on his breast. The mantle of sheep or goatskin, called *hyúgor*, is worn slung across the back by a cord which crosses the chest obliquely over one shoulder. It is cured with the hair or wool on, and is used as a protection for the loins

against the cold winds of the country. The people of Kafiristan which, from what I have heard of that country, is a somewhat similar mountain region to this, wear a mantle of the same kind which, from its usual colour, is called *siyâh post*, or "black skin," by their brethren converted to Islam; and they are by them, consequently, distinguished from other pagan tribes by the appellation *siyáh post Kafir*, or "pagans of the black skin." This term has been strangely misunderstood and rendered as *siyáh posh*, or "clothed in black," a term which is far more appropriately applicable to the indigo-dyed dress of the Afghans themselves, or to us, or any other people who wear clothes of a more or less dark colour, than to the mountaineer of Kafiristan, whose usual dress is a woollen home-made stuff of the natural hue, and not the grotesque costume I have seen represented in a photograph of a reputed Kafir in his national dress.

The rest of the dress of the Bhot peasant is very simple. A loose shirt of coarse cotton is covered by a long frock of thick and strong woollen material. They are bound round the waist by a leather belt, over which pass the folds of a long scarf whose ends hang over the loose trowsers; and these, like the scarf, are of the same texture as the frock. Coarse woollen socks cover the feet, which are farther encased in clumsy shoes of felt and leather patch-work, or in boots of sheepskin worn with the wool inside; whilst the legs are protected by the folds of a long woollen bandage, ornamented with an edging of varied colours. From his belt hang the several indispensable items of his travelling equipment, or indeed of his momentary requirements of ordinary life. His single-bladed knife, carried in a leather sheath, hangs on one side with a flint case which seems all brass binding; and a pouch-bag for tea and tobacco, and odds and ends, with his bright

iron pipe, hangs on the other. Whilst in the capacious interior of his fob are stowed away his bag of parched barley-meal, or as often a lump of its dough half-stewed by the heat of his body, and the wooden bowl from which he eats it. Suspended obliquely across his back is what looks like a quiver, but our peaceable Bhot carries neither bow nor arrow, nor other weapon of war, and his suspicious looking cylinder of wood, fluted and chased with patterns of simple design, is only his tea-churn.

From Kargil the road crosses the river in front of the fort by three or four log bridges which are connected by a line of embankment, and rising out of the hollow for four or five miles leads across a high undulating tract of gravel which occupies the angle between the two rivers, and then descends into the Paskyum valley.

The successive reaches on either shore as the river winds down the valley are occupied by flourishing little hamlets; these are surrounded by their corn fields and plantations of willow and poplar, and present a pleasing picture of prosperity amidst the bare rocks around.

Beyond them the valley contracts suddenly at a gorge (on the cliffs to the right of which the remains of stone parapets surmounted by the ruins of a fort attract notice, as evidences of some conqueror's destructive work), through which the road passes over some very rough ground. The path is very narrow and overlooks the river, as it scoops its way through a narrow passage in the serpentine rocks, up to Lotsum, a village of thirty or forty houses.

We alighted here for breakfast, and then resuming our route followed up the river course, crossing its stream six or seven times by bridges, through a contracted, tortuous, and wild defile of bare rocks of serpentine, conglomerate, chlorite and schistose shales which close in

upon the water channel in a confused succession and no order. The path had been repaired and cleared of stones, &c. for our journey, but in parts was very narrow and difficult. We found a number of coolies posted all along the route at the difficult spots—where the path had been built up across clefts in the shelving rocks, or where it wound round a projecting bluff, or lay across a bridge —to aid our cattle in case of accident.

At about eight miles from Lotsum the defile widens into a more open valley in which stands the village of Shargol. We camped near it on a turfy reach in a bend of the river. Distance, eighteen miles from Kargil.

Here we came upon the first monument of the Budhist faith we had yet met in our march, and from this onwards until we passed on to the uninhabited wastes of the Tibat highlands, we saw no trace of any other creed. It was a *mắné phắné* built on the bank overlooking our camp, and was nothing but a broad wall of loose-set stones; its measurements were ninety-three paces long, eight paces wide, and four feet high. On the north side of the wall, and exactly midway, was a square slab of stone set upright in a covered recess, and carved in very low relief with figures of Budh and his priests. On each side of it was a slab similarly set, and covered with writing chiselled on its surface. The broad top of the wall in all its surface was thickly strewed with a multitude of undressed stones, flat boulders, and slabs of slate, each of which was carefully inscribed with an unvarying formula of letters lightly chiselled on the surface. The writing was read to us by a Budhist priest as *om mane padme hom*, and was said to be the Budhist form of invoking the Deity.

We subsequently saw several others of these *mắné phắné*, and one at Leh nearly half a mile long. The inscribed stones set on the top are deposited by the laity—

for whom the priest or *lamma* does the writing—to propitiate the Deity for the souls of defunct relatives, for protection against evil, for favour in some enterprise, or for the attainment of some desire or other—of which in their variety the Bhot mind is as susceptible as that of more tutored peoples. The *máné* is held in reverence by the people, and in passing is always kept on the right hand.

Our next march to Kharbo was fourteen miles. The first part of the route was up a well cultivated valley, the fields of which, sloping down to the river in wide terrace slopes, were stacked with the new-cut corn, or waving in yellow crops of wheat and barley ready for the sickle.

At the entrance to the valley we passed under the *Gonpa* or "monastery" of Mulbé, one of those extraordinary cliff-perched habitations which in this country form so characteristic a feature in the landscape, and further on stopped to examine an isolated rock, standing by the roadside mid-valley, which caught the eye at a distance by the bright drapery fluttering in the breeze from its summit.

On the north face of the rock is carved the gigantic figure called *Chamba*, which Dr Henderson has photographed; and at its base stands a little hut in which are kept the paraphernalia for his periodical service. On its summit are fixed two poles, each of which is topped by a bell-shaped mitre or copper cap; beneath the cap hangs a white calico petticoat of three flounces, trimmed with a deep border of red cloth. This figure, according to Cunningham, only dates from about 1620 A.D., when Budhism was restored in the country after its suppression in the beginning of the century by the Muhammadan ruler of Iskardo. There is a similar figure, also called *Chamba*, on an isolated rock near the village of Diggar,

which we saw on our return journey; but the poles with the mitre and gown were absent. In both the figures are perfect, and are said to have been concealed from the Muhammadan invaders from Kashmir and Iskardo by building up the face of the rock with a wall of stone and plaster of mud, fronted by a hut as if the residence of a recluse. In both localities the remains of this device are still traceable on the face of the rock.

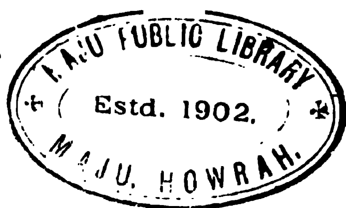
Beyond the *Chamba* figure, continuing up the valley through a succession of corn fields and hamlets with their outlying *chhorten*, we turned away from the Wákhá river, and proceeding up a dry gully winding amongst bare schistose slopes, topped by banks of conglomerate and ridges of stratified limestone, crossed the Namiḳa pass, about 11,900 feet high by aneroid indication, and descended by a long slope to the valley of the Shitang river, which flows north towards Iskardo.

We here turned to the right, and following up the course of the river in a south-east direction passed along a fertile tract similar to that we had left on the other side of the pass, and camped at Kharbo. Here the elevation by hypsometric observation is about 11,350 feet. This is an apparently recently built village at the base of a precipitous cliff on the very summit and topmost ledges of which are the ruins of a former village. Even the *chhorten* here appear quite new, and the coating of glistening mica clay with which they are whitewashed wears all the freshness of recent application. The envoy told me that, when he passed this way three years ago, the upper village was inhabited, and we were informed by villagers that it was deserted two years ago, owing to a heavy fall of snow breaking in the roofs.

Our march on this stage was a most interesting one to me from the more declared character of the living Bud-

hism amongst which we found ourselves—a creed and polity I had heretofore only been acquainted with through its relics so plentiful amidst the ruins of Yusufzai. The village of Takcha, which drew attention across the valley as we approached camp, piled up as it is Budhist fashion on precipitous projections of an isolated cliff detached from the ridge behind it, forcibly reminded me of many a similarly situated town the ruins of which still top the bare crags and uneven summits of the treeless ridges that indent the Yusufzai plain.

Our further progress through this country enabled me to compare the living form of the faith here with its extinct remains there, and my imagination peopled afresh with their ancient tenants the ruined cities of Takhti Bahi, and Rani Gatt, of Sawul Dher, and Sahri Bahlol, and many others. But how different the picture of the past from the reality of the present, I shall have to tell farther on.



CHAPTER IV.

From Kharbo we marched to Lammayuru, fourteen miles. The road leads up the defile over a succession of knolls of conglomerate rock, and at about the fifth mile crosses the river by a spar bridge to the little village of Hanadku. Beyond this the river comes down from the Kanji valley through a deep and dark cleft in the vertical cliffs of the slaty mountains to the right of the road, and where it debouches on the Kharbo valley is joined by a thready rivulet which drains the long slopes of the Photo La range ahead.

We followed up the main channel of this latter stream, and by an easy, gradual ascent rose to the crest of the Photo La pass, where is a conspicuous *chhorten.* I alighted here to take the elevation by the boiling point of water, and found it about 13,670 feet. The view from this spot is extensive, and singularly monotonous in the repetition of its dreary aspect. In whichever direction the eye is turned it is met by the same unvaried prospect of long slopes of crumbling schist, topped by serrated peaks of the vertical strata of slate—the more prominent in their dark shades against the snow lodged on the ledges between them—and backed by towering ranges of perpetual snow. No valley intervenes to break the interminable maze of mountain ridges, no forest appears to gladden the prospect, nor is a vestige of pasture traceable to mitigate the rough sterility of the scene.

The only object of interest in the near landscape—and it needs be looked for, so little discernible are its constituent elements in the dull uniformity of colour and shade pervading the prospect—is the monastery of Lammayuru, whose mud-coloured huts and weather-worn *chhorten* are dimly traceable in the dark shadows at the bottom of the descent down which our route lies.

Descending the gully, we approached this extraordinary habitation in the solitude of these inhospitable and rugged mountains, and camping on some terraced slopes under the shadow of two cliffs on whose topmost summits the monastery is perched, found our attention for the moment diverted from the prompted contemplation of those mysterious causes which influence reasoning man in the election of his mode of life—here to us so strangely and strikingly exemplified—by the more immediate bustle of the no less strange scene that surrounded us.

The limited area of the shelving little basin, bordered above by its lines of *mane* and rows of *chhorten*, was covered with a confused crowd of docile Bhots, obstreperous yaks, and frisky ponies; and was strewed in characteristic disorder with piles of firewood, stacks of fodder, and sacks of corn; all of which, with other supplies, had been collected here for the use of our party.

The scene of plenty and activity in the still solitude of this barren spot was probably as rare a sight to its phlegmatic inhabitants as was that of such a party as ours amongst them, and the red garments of the Lammas moving amongst the crowd testified to their having made the occasion one for a holiday.

During the afternoon, Captain Chapman and I went up the steep in rear of the cliff to explore the *Gonpa* or Lammasary on its summit, and at the top of the ascent

were cordially welcomed by some very jovial looking priests, whose shaven crowns and rotund figures—barely concealed by their loose gowns and covering mantle—spoke of very comfortable fare; whilst the heavy sensual expression of their features, and merry mood of mind told that the life of the Buddhist monk is not one so entirely of privation and vigil as the solitude of his situation and poverty of his country, apart from the proper duties of his profession, would lead one to expect.

Our obliging friends very good-naturedly conducted us through the intricate mazes of their dwelling, and without the least prejudice or hesitation introduced us to the mysteries of their "sanctum sanctorum." This was a succession of three low-roofed, dark chambers, the obscurity of which was dimly lighted by the flames of half-a-dozen cotton wicks, or spiles, stuck upright in as many pods of butter, set in little brass bowls which were ranged in front of the idols. These last were supported against the wall on a raised planking, and enshrouded by hanging curtains of embroidered wool and silk drapery, and were but indistinctly observable in the obscurity of their mysterious retreat. The idols bore very much the look of common Hindu deities, though they represented a different mythology, and on the shelf in front of them lay a number of the *lingam* and *yuni* emblems roughly modelled out of lumps of barley-meal paste. We were here received by the head Lamma, and half-a-dozen others all arrayed in full canonicals, and standing in a semicircle with their instruments of music ready in hand. And at a nod from our attendants they assailed us with a most diabolic confusion of sounds which, within the close walls of their temple, produced none of the more appropriate impressions we subsequently experienced under different conditions. The walls of one of

the chambers are painted with pictures representing episodes in the lives of particular deities whose morality is exhibited in a vicious form, whilst the shelves of another are piled with carefully folded manuscripts replete with Buddhist lore.

From these we passed out through a rough little doorway on to a small open court which was nearly filled by a circular tope surmounted by a *chhorten*, and from its parapet looked down the straight drop of the cliff on which it stood on to our camp below, and across the narrow valley on to the gravelly slope of the opposite hill on which near its base was set the Buddhist prayer, *Om mane padme hon*, in gigantic characters formed of bright white pebbles.

We then entered some other low and narrow chambers which appeared to be the dormitories and refectories of the monks, and in one of them found two nuns engaged in working up some meal into dough for the evening repast. They were hard-featured bony-looking creatures, and seemed to be the drudges of the establishment. They did not cease their work even to turn and gaze upon us as we passed. These chambers, like the others appropriated to the service of their gods, were mean and dirty hovels, and led by a wood staircase down to some similar chambers full of stable litter, and evidently the stalls of the ponies, cows, and goats of the monastery. The view from the windows of the upper rooms looked on one side up the gully we had come down, and on the other down a dismal defile that lay before us; whilst in front it was faced by the blank array of bare gravel and clay banking up the foot of the hill that closed the valley on that side, and in rear was overlooked by the rugged heights of a hill similarly desolate and bare. A more tiresome and stupefying prospect is

not to be conceived, and is, doubtless, coupled with the weary monotony of their existence, one cause of the disreputable lives the monks lead. For during nearly half the year they are doomed to idleness, shut up in their inaccessible retreats by the frosts and snows of winter.

There are twenty monks (*lamma*) and eight nuns (*kami*) attached to this monastery (*gonpa*). They appear to be a happy community, and by no means discontented with their lot. Our guides showed us some malt liquor prepared from the huskless barley of this country. It is called *chhang*, and is the daily drink of the monks who, under its influences, get comfortably fuddled and fat. A spirit is also distilled from the same malt, and is only used on special occasions when the community is permitted to revel in drunkenness. Their superior is always appointed from Hlassa, but the rest are recruited in the country, the second son of every family being dedicated to the priesthood. These lay priests, if I may so style the Bhots, who are thus dedicated to the church, wear the *lamma* dress, but pursue the ordinary avocations of life till called to the cloisters, according to the requirements of their church, when they must renounce the world, and assume the celibate life of the monk. With the nuns the monastic life is optional, and apparently is only adopted by the friendless and homeless.

The monasteries are supported by the people, and governed by the Dalay Lamma (whose seat is Hlassa) as the head of the faith, through subordinate Lammas appointed by him. The priesthood thus provided for pass life with less of its cares and troubles than fall to the lot of most mortals, and by all evidences their service in the church is none of self-denial, nor of pious devotion to the pure doctrine enunciated by their great lawgiver.

On the contrary, it is a vain repetition of meaningless

formulæ, and the degraded worship of images, without discipline of mind or body. And it flourishes here without a rival amongst a people steeped in the grossest ignorance and most timid superstition. A people who, in every change in the elements, and every accident of daily life, see the intervention of an offended deity, or the malignity of an evil spirit; and whose whole anxiety is to appease the one, and avert the other through the mediation of their priests who are the only depositories of their mental culture. This institution of the priesthood, however, coupled with that of polyandry which obtains amongst this people, is not without its benefits; and, perhaps under the existing conditions, owes its endurance to its adaptation to the requirements of the country. And the two together are probably the forms of polity best suited to the existence of the population as a peaceable, well ordered, and industrious community.

It is the custom for the brothers of one family to have a single wife in common, and for the children to take the name and obey, as head of the family, the eldest husband. By this means, and the transfer of so many to a life of celibacy in the monasteries, the population is kept down to a proportion which the country is capable of supporting. For the only parts of it which are habitable are the narrow valleys through which its rivers flow, and the little nooks in the mountains which are watered by their torrent tributaries.

The population of the Ladakh province of Kashmir, from this place to Nubra, is roughly estimated at 30,000 houses or, reckoning seven per house, 210,000 souls. And after passing through the country, that figure seems to me to represent fully the number of mouths it is capable of feeding.

Consequently it would seem that polyandry and Budhism, each subservient to the other, and both to the requirements of the locality, are practically the institutions best suited to the country, and owe to this cause their survival of the Mahommedan propaganda which have been established, and flourish in the more productive countries to the north and south.

Otherwise it is not easy to account for the failure of the crescentade from Yarkand in the sixteenth century, nor for the cessation of the Mahommedan conquerors of Kashmir in their career of victory and conversion at the frontier of the country. Their polygamous institutions, and more expansive polity, if forced upon the country, must have produced a hard struggle for bare existence, and endless forms of internal violence and disorder would have come into operation to keep down life to a supportable limit.

As it is, under the existing institutions, the population is kept not only within the limit capable of supporting life in the country, but of living as a peaceful, happy, and well-ordered community amongst whom violent crime is a rare offence, and litigation happily at a minimum. Such being the case, we may pardon the harmless superstition of the people, and weigh gently the faults of their priests.

We left Lammayuru to its solitude and gloom early next morning in pursuit of our route. The sky was dull and overcast with a lead-coloured stratum of cloud which increased the sombre hues of the mountains, and intensified the dismal shades of the deep cleft defile through which we set out from camp, the while affording us a view of the country in a most depressing and melancholy form of its aspect.

Our path led down between some lacustrine banks of

fine clay into a deep, and dark, winding defile, overlooked by some isolated pillars of gravel which stood sentry-like on the steep slopes at its upper end, and which by their tabular tops, inclined to a plane parallel with that of the slope on which they stood, bore evidence of the considerable wearing away of the soil around them.

It then crossed from side to side following a thready little stream, fringed with the coltsfoot and crowfoot and other plants delighting in a moist soil, through a succession of clefts in the rock; and traversing steep slopes of loose disintegrated slate by a soft unstable track which looks down upon tremendous precipices below, and up at stupendous heights above, finally brought us to the bottom of the gully where it joins a defile through which flows a clear blue stream coming down from the Zanskar hills to our right. We went down this tortuous defile by a carefully built path along the river's banks across the slopes of rock and *débris* which form them, and crossing the stream by spar bridges two or three times *en route* emerged into the more spacious valley of the Indus, here called Singhe Khababs, on whose opposite bank is seen the high road from Ladakh to Iskardo and Gilgit. My guide, here pointing to the sandy and gravelly slopes of the Zanskar stream where it joined the Indus, informed me that the people of Iskardo were in the habit of coming here every spring to search for gold brought down by the first meltings of the winter snow.

The Indus here flows between overshelving banks of conglomerate and gravel, amongst which are imbedded masses of rolled granite resembling the great boulders of the same rock which strew the surface along our route, at the foot of the slate and schist slopes which bound

the valley on either side. Its stream presents a turbid and boisterous current rolling noisily over the rocks obstructing its way.

At a mile or more from Khalsi, we crossed the river by a spar bridge thrown across a gap in the hard blue slate over which it here flows, and passing through the little fort which occupies the rock at the farther end joined the high road to Iskardo, or as often pronounced Skardo. Like that on the opposite bank, it is a broad track over the hard gravelly ground, strewed with rolled blocks of granite, which forms the strip of land between the river and the bounding slopes of slate and schist *débris.*

Near the entrance to the village are some *mane* and *chhorten,* and many of the latter are observed dotting the surface on the outskirts of the village. They are the monumental receptacles of the ashes of defunct Lammas and lay Buddhists of distinction, and are set around the village limits in the belief that the souls of the departed still take an interest in the scenes of their earthly life, and protect the precincts of their former habitations by their direct intercession with the gods. Our farther progress through the country showed a similar disposition of these tokens of Budhist faith to be the general rule. That is to say they are built on the roads leading into the villages, or on eminences surrounding them.

At the entrance to Khalsi our party was received by nearly the whole of its inhabitants assembled, in separate groups of men and women, on the roadside. They were headed by a Lamma who was busy turning a prayer-wheel which he held in his hands, and as we approached they all bowed low and saluted us with the usual *jo-jo,* according to Bhot custom. The envoy bowing his acknowledgments our party went on, and

left the good-natured crowd to stare at the cavalcade following in our train.

This is the village which, on the orthography of the author then quoted, I have before mentioned under the name of Cala'. Shya as the winter quarters of the Yarkand army on their return from the disastrous attempt to invade this sacred seat of the Budhist faith in the sixteenth century. The fort itself is now a barely-distinguishable ruin. Its remains are seen a mile or so further up the river, beyond a deep ravine which intervenes between it and the village, perched on an isolated rock which commands the passage at a narrow bend of the stream. It is called Balo Khara by the Bhots, and is said to have been demolished some thirty years ago by Zorawar Sing, the Sikh general who conquered this country for the Maharaja Gulab Sing. And the present little fort commanding the Khalsi bridge was built in its stead by Diwan Hira Sing, the Maharaja's first governor of the annexed province. Beyond the ruins the road goes over some rough ground, obstructed by a confused jumble of rocks of varied colour and composition, which tumble down the slopes into the channel of the river itself. There is greenish gneiss, mottled pudding-stone, and black lava mixed amongst masses of bluish limestone, ash-grey schists, and pebble conglomerate—all within a course of a few miles; and then the path returns to a gravelly bank, covered with granite boulders, similar to that left at Khalsi. On this strip of drift, which occupies a bend in the river channel, stands the village of Snurulla with its walnut trees and apricot orchards, and gravelly fields of corn. Distance from Lammayuru, eighteen miles.

We camped on some fields between the village and the river bank, and halted the next day—17th Septem-

ber—weatherbound. A steady, soaking drizzle set in soon after our arrival on the ground, and continued with little intermission till the following evening; whilst the heavy clouds overhead we had set out with closed around in the form of a dense nimbus which concealed all from view beyond a few hundred yards. This wet weather, despite its discomforts and gloom, proved very useful and interesting in unfolding to us a fund of information on the physical phenomena of the country, which might otherwise have remained unthought of or unnoticed by us. The rain here, whilst it showed us one of the dangers to which travellers in this country are subject, and explained (what we had seen all along the road without understanding their true meaning) how they are avoided, also illustrated the manner in which the mountains are gradually disintegrating, and accounted for those long unbroken slopes of *débris* which are the peculiar feature of their ranges.

Whilst occupied in the shelter of my tent my attention was repeatedly attracted by a swift rumbling sound which suddenly ended in a rapid succession of loud crashes, not unlike the discharge of musketry. I several times rose and looked out across the river, above whose bank we were camped, at the long slope of the hill opposite, and from which the sounds proceeded, but could see nothing to account for the strange noises.. At length, whilst gazing in search of some moving object on the dull spread of bluish-grey ground facing me, I caught sight of a great block of rock rolling down the steep. It bounded from two or three projections in the line of its descent, and breaking off fragments by the concussion took them along with increased speed till, one after the other, they all plunged from the bank amongst the boulders in the river, and there ended their wild career

with a succession of loud reports like the bangs of a number of guns. Meanwhile the loose particles of slaty *débris* down which they had come, thus set in motion, kept up a rattling noise till their progress was stopped by the resistance of heavier pieces below them. This subsidence of the *débris*, though very declared by its sound, was not easily discerned by the eye; and it was not till I had watched several large detached stones roll down that I actually saw the *débris* itself in motion.

The alternate frosts and heats to which these rocks are subjected, for both in their degrees are high within the revolution of night and day, crack and fissure their strata in all directions, and the wind playing upon these gaps blows away loose particles, and thus widens the rents. Then rain, or the stream of melting snow from above, washes away some supporting dust or grit, and the detached mass rolls headlong down the steep, as described.

Not unfrequently such blocks of rock are set in motion by the step of the wild sheep whose tracks are seen in all directions on the hills of this country, scoring the slopes with their chequered lines; though what they can find to eat is not apparent, for the hills are as bare as a picked bone. We saw none of these animals on the line of march, but were assured that they swarmed on the hills in our route. This is probably true, judging from the similarity of the hills to those on which we did find them subsequently.

These stone avalanches, if they may be so termed, are of constant occurrence amongst these hills after rain, and during the period the winter snows are melting away; and they are one of the most dreaded dangers the traveller in this country has to face, for it is not always that a river, as here, interposes to protect him. And hence it is that the Bhot never thinks of camping in the open in these

valleys, as he is wont to do on the wide plateaux of the highlands, but always takes shelter in the cavern of some secure bank, or scoops out, or walls in, some ready hollow under the lee of any firm rock, as we saw so often on our route. Further on in our journey we passed many spots where we found the defiles obstructed by these dangerous missiles, and had cause to congratulate ourselves that there were neither melting snows nor showers of rain at the time of our passage.

From Snurulla we marched to Saspol, eighteen miles. Our route lay up the valley along the right bank of the river, and crossed several bluffs projecting upon it. On descending one of these we saw a raven hunt and kill a rock martin close upon our path. The little thing was sailing gaily to and fro under a vertical cliff, when its huge black enemy swooping down from above terrified it so with his pursuing hoarse croak, that after a vain effort to escape the poor martin lost control over its wings, and fluttering aimlessly was at once clutched by the monster who alighted on a rock beside us, and forthwith tore his tender prey asunder. I had a small stick gun in my hand, and reining up fired a charge of No. 10 shot at the raven, but, though only six or eight paces off, he flew away unhurt with his prize.

In the latter part of this march vegetation begins to revive. The tamarisk fringes the water-courses with the dog-rose, and the rock-rose, or "cistus," sprawls its abundant foliage over the stony surface, whilst the ephedra hides the rocky inequalities with its bristly sprouts. Some small hamlets, too, appear on either side of the river, perched upon high boulder banks separated by deep ravines.

As we rode on to our camp-ground at Saspol we were greeted by a full choir of the Lammas of the place.

They stood in a row a little off the road, and gave us a performance on their instruments; whilst the women of the place, decked out in their best attire, and ranged in a line along the roadside, saluted us with a low bow and the usual *jo-jò*. We received a similar mark of welcome at every place we came to on our onward journey through Ladakh, though the Lammas did not always appear in such grand form as here. There were eight of them, all dressed alike in the red robes and high bonnets of their order, and playing upon the instruments peculiar to their craft. The character of the music was as strange and unique as the appearance of the performers, and strikingly in accord with the surroundings of the scene.

The beat of the drums and clang of the cymbals in no degree lessened the initial bray of the trumpets, nor marred the soft, sad airs of their final notes. Indeed, the combination was admirably harmonised, and the strong tones with which the music commenced floated away to the silent hills in soft echoes prolonged by the plaintive airs that followed them.

The trumpets are awkward-looking instruments from six to eight or nine feet long, and curved like a cow horn. The lower part rests on the ground, whilst the performer, standing or seated, plays on the mouth-piece. His practice consists of a succession of jerky blasts which gradually diminish in force and duration till they sound as soft trills which, in turn, lapse into plaintive strains of peculiar pathos, and again swell into sonorous and solemn sounds which are borne away on the air, and prolonged in its vibrations.

The character of this music is altogether peculiar, and unlike anything I have heard anywhere else. Its solemn melancholy notes, heard floating off from some lofty cliff-perched monastery, waken up the silent solitudes of the

mountains with the only sounds appropriate to their nature; and they are re-echoed from their stern frowning heights in response to the long, soft, plaintive lays that follow them in a manner that strikes the ear as perfectly agreeable to the scene.

Shortly after our arrival in camp Mr Johnson, the Maharaja's governor of Ladakh, came in from Leh to pay his respects to the envoy, and detail the arrangements he had made for the escort of the embassy to the frontier. He here joined our camp and accompanied it to Shahidulla, himself with untiring energy and devotion making all the arrangements for carriage and supplies on the journey, and with a success we little anticipated.

Our next march was to Nimmo, fourteen miles. After marching an hour over some rough ground similar to that before passed, and crossing a lively little torrent from the hills on our left, we turned away from the river bank, and riding on to a wide gravelly plain, separated from it by a ridge of hill, crossed a corner of it, and regained the river further on.

This undulating plateau is called Bazgo *thang* or the "Bazgo Plain," and is the first open bit of ground we have seen since crossing the Photo La. It is an arid waste with hardly a blade of vegetation to vary the bare nakedness of the soil. We found a herd of seven or eight gazelles grazing at the hill skirt away to the left. The envoy and I dismounted to stalk them, but, as the ground offered no cover, our wary game, after a brief survey and right judgment of our intentions, verified by a long shot from each of us as they made off, went across the plain to a valley beyond, in which, as we followed a little way in pursuit, we discerned a bright spread of cultivation around the villages of Tarutze and

Ling. They are watered by the rivulet which we crossed on our way to this point.

From the plateau we descended to the Bazgo hollow; it is a fertile and populous tract in this region of sterility and solitude; and picturesque in the clusters of its Budhist monuments and neatly built dwelling-houses, amidst a general spread of fields and fruit-trees which extend away up amongst the hills to the north as far as the village of Neh. Owing to its sheltered situation Bazgo is reckoned the warmest winter residence in Ladakh. It has a large *shahran* or "polo ground," which, as its neglected state betokened, is now rarely used—the taste for the sport having declined here with the downfall of the native rule, only to linger awhile in the more remote Dras and Kargil districts. The good people of Bazgo, who assembled on the roadside to do honour to the envoy as his cavalcade rode past their dwellings, appeared to be a thriving and happy community. The Bhot ladies who graced the ceremony with their presence had evidently bestowed unusual attention to their toilet on this rare occasion, and presented an array of Tatar beauty and fashion we nowhere else saw to such advantage; whilst the natural simplicity and modesty of their demeanour, coupled with the goodwill of their salutation, evinced their care to produce a good impression upon the stranger.

Their dress is remarkable, and like everything else in this strange country apparently well adapted to its requirements and the habits of the people. The long frock and girdle sash, and the trowsers differ little from those worn by the men. The material and the pattern are much the same, but the colour and finish are different; and in their choice the fair ones display their proverbial good taste. Dark colours or black relieved by an edging

of red or blue are those usually seen, and they set off to the best advantage the ornaments the Bhot beauty is so fond of; and not the least important of them the ample sheepskin mantle, which, next to her head-dress, is her special pride and care.

This is an oblong rug of sheepskin, loosely slung behind by a band of braid passing obliquely across the bosom, and ornamented at the edges of the fleece by a broad border of particoloured patchwork. It serves as shawl, wrapper, and bedding, as occasion requires; and it is always worn out of doors as a protection for the back against the cold winds of the country.

But the head-dress is the most peculiar object of attraction amongst the strange fashions of the Bhotmo toilette. The hair, parted in the centre of the forehead, is plaited over the crown into two broad fillets, which are prolonged as lappets hanging down the back by means of braided wool adjuncts. The two fillets are united along the middle line by a mixed row of couries, bits of red coral, agate, turquoise, malachite, and gold coins, according to the means of the wearer. These ornaments are sometimes seen studding the fillet so closely as to conceal the hair, and form a sort of plated shield to the head. Amongst the wealthy they are of finer quality, and look well, but as commonly seen they form a repulsive-looking medley suggestive of torment to the wearer; for, when once made up, they are seldom undone for months together, or may be years.

The side tresses are arranged in puffs over each ear, and kept in form by a patch of black fleece and braid, which covers the ears and temples, and looks somewhat like the blinkers of a coach horse; and hanging from the ears below their edges are strings of large beads of glass, or coral, or turquoise, &c.

Besides these the Bhot woman wears a necklace of similar ornaments, and large wristlets of a single bit of white conch, and in addition a chatelaine which hangs from her girdle and is loaded with white bosses of conch, or strung with couries, and beads of agate and turquoise; all conspicuous by their swinging against the dark ground of her frock.

And yet, as if not already sufficiently decorated to the taste of their partner lords, the comely ones, or those who consider themselves so, add to the charms of their personal adornment the improvement of the complexion by the process called *shogholo*. This consists of smearing the cheeks and forehead with the juice and seeds of the ripe berry of the belladona plant which grows here as a weed amongst the cultivation. Much pains are bestowed—with the aid of a little hand mirror and pencil of wood—in arranging the bright yellow seeds effectively, and the result is that the face appears sprinkled with grains of gold, and sparkles with a rich brightness which could only please the Bhot accustomed to nothing more varied than the monotonous shades of slate and granite rocks.

At Nimmo, the Indus receives a considerable tributary from the Zanskar valley, which lies to the south of some snow-topped mountains bounding the valley on the opposite side. In the angle of junction is a wild waste of gravel and conglomerate, the heat radiated from which in summer is said to render Nimmo a very hot residence during that season; whilst in winter the cold is so severe that the river is crossed on the ice.

It is to the effect probably of these combined causes—the clear rays of a powerful sun, and the bright glare from wide-spread snow, both acting in an unusually dry and rarefied atmosphere—that the Bhot, I mean the

common Bhot who is exposed to the weather, owes his peculiar complexion. It is not the clear dark colour of the people of India, however varied its shades from the ruddy glow of the Afghan to the olive hue of the Hindu, or from the sallow tinge of the hill-tribes to the black skin of the outcast races of the peninsula. Nor is it the light colour of the people of Tartary, with its lesser range in variety from the dingy yellow of the Chinese settlers to the pink and pale of the Andijani conquerors. It is a dusky, muddy brown of very much the same colour as the mountain region he inhabits; so much so, that he is often not distinguishable from the ground, unless his movements attract attention. Many times on the march I was struck by this fact on suddenly coming upon little groups of coolies seated on the road side, whom I did not distinguish from the rocks and soil around till close upon them; and this not only in the deep defiles of the Indus tributaries, but also on the wide plateaux of the Caracoram range.

The chiefs, and priests, and women of the wealthier classes have much the same sort of turbid yellowish-brown complexion, though in them it is less pronounced than in the poorer classes. Amongst these it is shown in full force by the poor peasant women who perform the labours of agriculture, &c.; and they are the most hideous and repulsive creatures I have anywhere seen.

From Nimmo we marched to Leh—nineteen miles—and halted eight days to complete arrangements for the passage of the Caracoram. Our route led along the skirt of some granite hills over an undulating gravelly tract which gradually widens into the Ladakh basin or valley.

At about half-way we descended to the river channel. It here presents a wide bed through which the Indus winds its way amidst patches of cultivation and pasture.

On the left of the road, under the granite rocks, is a succession of lacustrine banks of fine clay which slope down to the basin in four or five steps. They end on a narrow pass in the rocks below the Phitok Gonpa. This is a Lammasary which looks over the valley from the summit of a high rock on the river bank, and to the right of our path.

As we rode past the Lammas appeared on the terraces of their elevated abode, and gave us their benediction in full band. From this we set our faces up the long gravelly slope at the top of which stands Leh piled up the hill sides in the fashion of the country. The valley is a deep circular basin crossed midway by the Indus, along whose course are several villages and much cultivation. For the rest the land slopes steeply from both sides to the river, and presents a wide surface of gravel and stone, for the most part waste. At the foot of the hills to the south are the villages of Stok and Máthá with their orchards and fields; and at the foot of those on the north are the town and fort and suburbs of Leh, the capital of the country.

On the outskirts of the town the envoy was welcomed by a deputation of the principal merchants of the place, and his arrival was announced by a salute of fifteen guns from the fort, whilst a company of its garrison was paraded on the roadside to receive him with military honours. Further on he was met by Mr Shaw, the British Joint-Commissioner, who conducted him through the town to the Residency, in the garden of which our camp was pitched.

During our stay here, our followers and cattle were equipped with the warm clothing which the foresight of our chief had ordered to be prepared against our arrival. Each man was provided with a coat and cap lined with

sheep or lamb's skin, and boots lined with the same fur, or else thick felt. And each of our riding horses and baggage mules was covered with a strong blanket lined with felt.

The experience the envoy gained on his former journey to Yarkand was not lost on this occasion, and it was in no small degree that the success of our passage across those inhospitable highlands of the Caracoram was owing to the admirable arrangements made by him. Our followers and cattle were what we depended on to serve and transport us in the time of need, and it was necessary to maintain them in a state of efficiency. Our followers and escort were consequently mounted, and our baggage transported on the carriage provided by the Kashmir authorities as far as the frontier. By this arrangement our men and cattle arrived at the frontier in a state of efficiency to meet contingencies, instead of worn and broken down by the hardships of the worst part of the road. And the wisdom of these precautions was exemplified by our first experiences beyond the Kashmir territory.

Our stay at Leh was enlivened by an excursion to the southern side of the valley to visit the Hemis Gonpa, eighteen miles, distant on the hills to the south of the river, and to have a day's shooting on the hills beyond Stok. Colonel Gordon, Captain Chapman, and I set out together for the monastery, which is the largest and wealthiest in the country. It is situated at the top of a singularly wild and solitary glen, frowned on at every turn in its winding course by some overhanging bluff of sombre conglomerate or gneiss. The silence here as we followed the steep path, looking for the first glimpses of the now familiar signs of the Lamma's retreat, was oppressive; and it was not till we had come in full view of its white walls, shining against the dark ground of

the towering masses of rock behind, that our ears were greeted by the melancholy music which floated on the air from their lofty terraces.

The view of the monastery from below is wonderfully picturesque, and altogether unique of its kind. The white walls with their dark squares of window and door, and thick red lines of coping, from which project here and there poles topped with the bushy *yak's* tail, spread over the cliffs tier above tier and, with great masses of bare rock protruding amongst them, appear isolated in the very crowd of their assemblage.

The vast rocks in their front and rear meet at a deep narrow gorge beyond them in a mass of sombre shades quite appalling in the grave monotony and nakedness of their forms—a monotony and nakedness altogether unrelieved by the deep down strips of poplar and willow plantations that stand on the banks of the little rill they conceal by their thick growth.

The buildings of this monastery cover a considerable surface and form a small town. In many respects the architecture, even to that of the out-offices, resembles what is still traceable in the Budhist ruins of Yusufzai, particularly in those known as Takhti Bahi. In these ruins, with the exception of those near Babozai, there are no traces to show how the houses were roofed; but, from the resemblance of the structure of their walls, staircases, chambers, &c., to what is now seen in the monasteries of this country, it is probable they too were of similar construction, particularly since the two localities are equally poor in timber trees.

In the exception above noted, I saw in 1865 a chamber covered by a self-supporting roof in perfect order, and composed entirely of square tiles with bevelled edges, the pressure of which against each other kept

them from falling. This was evident in spots where the plaster had fallen off in the roof itself, but was more plainly seen by the relics of the broken roofs of adjoining chambers.

Here the roofs are flat, and supported on rafters laid with lath and brushwood and earth. And they have a parapet coping of one to two feet thick, formed of brushwood fascicles cut straight across, and laid with the ends thus trimmed projecting six or ten inches beyond the wall. These ends look much like those of a bundle of lead pencils in arrangement, and are usually stained with red ochre or similar colour.

The Hemis Gonpa is said to contain 800 monks and nuns. We saw nothing like that population in the place, though the accommodation is sufficient for a much larger number. We were informed that snow lies here for nearly three months every year, and that for five the people are shut up in their cells owing to the cold. Stores of grain, and flesh, and fuel, &c. are laid up in autumn, and amongst other supplies 500 sheep are slaughtered, and the flesh dried for the winter use of this monastery alone.

Our guides led us through the principal parts of the monastery, and from one block of houses to another, through narrow passages and up flights of steps, with the prayer-wheel meeting us at every turn. Here we found it spinning on the hand of a sedate Lamma, squatted solemn and silent in some solitary corner. Further on it was revolving under a thin jet of water, and elsewhere it was fixed in niches of the walls for the passer-by to turn as he went past, or it was stuck on some pinnacle for its wings to catch the moving breeze, and record so many more prayers of praise to the Almighty. At length we were conducted to a court in which a company of Lam-

'mas presently entertained us with a pantomime performance, the subject of which none of us understood. It was a very grotesque spectacle in imitation, we were told, of Chinese devil dances. The designs on the rich silken robes of the monks were evidently from the Celestial Empire. Most of the masks represented the heads of wild animals, and there were some of ogres and demons. These last, however, were the devices most common on the embroidery of the robes worn by the actors. There were some twenty or thirty of them altogether, some of whom had been assembled here for the occasion from the monasteries of Tiksi, Matha, and Stok.

Their performance consisted of a wild sort of dance round a flag staff in the centre of the court of the principal temple; and we witnessed it from the roof of a verandah facing a flight of steps at the entrance of the temple. The actors issued from the hall of the temple, headed by two portly Lammas in gorgeous silk robes (their appearance reminded one of the knave of cards), who took up a position opposite the musicians—beforehand seated in the verandah below us—whilst the rest, a troop of goblins, griffins, stags, boars, tigers, &c., &c., running down the steps, ranged themselves in a circle round the flagstaff, from which floated streamers of different colours.

The musicians now commenced some very lively and discordant music, and the dancers, at once set in motion, began to caper, and whirl, and fling their limbs about, the whole circle the while keeping its form and revolving round the centre pole. The bright colours of the loose mantles, covered with monstrous figures of flying dragons all eyes and teeth, of skulls and bones, of forked-tongue griffins, &c., with the huge masks of ogres and wild beasts all mixed together in a wild commotion,

formed an absurd melange, and with the noise of drums and trumpets, produced a perfect pandemonium, to the tumult of which the actors contributed by now and again joining in a chorus of unintelligible sounds. The performance concluded suddenly by the flight of the company up the steps down which they had come, back to the great hall of the temple from which they had emerged.

We presently followed them into their "sanctum," and were shown its mysteries, which were hidden behind hangings of richly embroidered silk. There were three principal halls hung with these screens, and each contained a number of deities, before whom were burning little wicks set in butter, just as we saw at Lammayuru. Some of the walls were piled with bundles of books on which the dust lay thick in reproof of their neglect; and others were covered with a multitude of paintings, often the representation of the same individual.

Amongst the number I recognised several from their resemblance to the sculptures excavated at Takhti Bahi, and elsewhere in Yusufzai. Particularly one supposed to represent Budh. It had a smooth face with a placid expression, and the head, the hair of which was gathered in a top-knot at the crown, was backed by a glory circle. The figure was seated cross-legged. Another was the portrait of some ancient king, whose head was adorned with a tiara of jewels of exactly the same pattern as those seen on some of the sculptures above mentioned.

Various animals and birds were also represented on the walls and hangings, and amongst them I recognised the sacred stork and the ostrich, though how this last came amongst them is not very intelligible. In these paintings I saw none of those historical tablets or domestic

scenes so common amongst the ancient sculptures, nor the variety of race type that is traceable amongst them; and was altogether disappointed in the architecture and fittings of the temple, as well as in the character of the art displayed within its walls.

During the years from 1861 to 1866, when with the Corps of Guides at Murdan, I excavated several of the Budhist ruins in the neighbouring parts of Yusufzai, and collected some hundreds of sculptures which, prior to my departure, were sent to the museums at Lahore and Peshawar. They represent a great variety of subjects, and several distinct races, and in an artistic point of view are of very different degrees of merit, as if the work of different periods. Amongst these sculptures were many which are supposed to represent remarkable events in the life of Budh, much after the same fashion that we picture those in the life of Christ. But I saw nothing here, either in the form of sculpture or painting, that bore any resemblance to these, though in the fifth century, when Fa Hian journeyed this way, Ladakh, in common with Yusufzai, was a flourishing seat of Budhism.

The high art, showing the cultivated talent of Greece, which is in Yusufzai illustrated in such varied forms, is nowhere traceable in this country amongst those charged with the special protection of Budhism, even if it ever did exist here in past times to the same degree of advancement as it did there, which, considering the nature of the country, and its sparse population, is not very probable.

Besides, from what is known of the history of the country—imperfect as it is—it would appear to have escaped those assaults of Islam which, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, laid waste the more accessible

regions around it, with a destructive fury the traces of which are still seen in the ruins that cover their surface.

During the ascendancy of the Mughal Empire, this country appears to have enjoyed undisturbed, under the tolerance characteristic of that rule, the possession of its ancient faith. And in the anarchy which, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, dismembered the Chaghtay kingdom, of which it formed a part, it would appear to have remained more or less isolated in the preservation of its own laws and institutions. For the restoration of Islam, on the reconstruction of the Chaghtay kingdom by Toghluc Tymur in the middle of the fourteenth century, did not advance beyond its former limit at Khutan; whilst the succeeding absorption of his kingdom into the empire raised by his cotemporary and survivor, the Amir Tymur Lang or Tamarlane, in the last quarter of the same century, effected no more in Tibat than did the rule of his predecessor in Mugholistan.

The death of Tamarlane was again the signal for internal dissensions, and, in the revolutions attending the partition of his empire, Kashghar rose into an independent kingdom as the heritage of the Mughal Khans, descendants through Toghluc Tymur of the Chaghtay sovereigns. Their rule, however, was so disordered and weak, through internal discords and contentions as much as through the political influences of the Tymuride government in the adjoining regions to the west, that it soon fell into the hands of a powerful family of the Doghlat tribe, which, since the time of Changiz, had enjoyed certain ranks and privileges as military governors of the several divisions of the Kashghar state. And finally, the government was usurped, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century (1479), by Mirza Ababakar, a descend-

ant of the hereditary Amirs Khudadad and Camaruddin, who figured so prominently in the history of the country under the dynasty of the Mughal Khans.

He commenced his career as independent ruler of Kashghar by the conquest of Khutan, and made some unsuccessful attempts to subjugate Tibat (which, under native chiefs, had maintained its freedom since the dissolution of the Chaghtay empire), his incursions being always repelled at the Nubra frontier. His successor, however, in whom the government, in 1513 A.D., was restored to the line of the Mughal Khans, signalised the close of his reign by that invasion of Ladakh which I have before mentioned. It is the first record we have of any attempt to plant Islam on this Budhist soil, and its disastrous results were repeated on a smaller scale in the beginning of the next century when Mir Ali, the Musalman chief of Baltistan, took Leh, and destroyed the monasteries all over the country.

He was obliged to retrace his steps to Skardo, his capital, and restore Jamya Namgyal, the native chief whom he had taken prisoner, to the government of his own country. And he immediately restored the ancient religion, and left those memorials of his zeal for the faith which we see in the existing rock-inscribed figures of Chamba which I have already mentioned, and dated on the authority of Cunningham's history of this country.

We have no other record of Islamite invasion of this country, though it has, since the time of Mir Ali, been traversed by the armies of Musalman allies. When, in 1678, Khoja Afac usurped the government of Kashghar from the descendants of Sultan Saíd Khan, in whom the rule of the Mughal Khans was restored, and sought the aid of the Calmac chief to support him against his opponents, the Ghaldan of Zunghar, coming

in answer to this appeal with an army of his Budhist Calmacs, seized the country for himself. And when some years later, in 1685, the members of the Khoja family rebelling were driven out of the country, and some of them fled to Kashmir through Tibat, a force of Zunghar troops—called Sârigh or Sâigh (Yellow) Calmac in distinction, to the Cara (Black) Calmac of Tibat—was sent in pursuit of them to Leh, which they took possession of, the Gyalpo or chief of Ladakh tendering allegiance to the Mughal sovereign in India sought aid of Aurangzeb's governor of Kashmir to expel them. He sent an army of 6000 Musalmans to drive the invaders from the country, which they did, and returned to Kashmir the following season. The Saigh Calmac or Soghpo, as the Bhots call them, however again invaded the country to avenge the conduct of their recalcitrant brethren, and after plundering Leh retired, on the cession of some territory which gave them the country of Rudok.

After this Ladakh remained in the hands of native rulers till 1720, when it was again invaded by Mir Murad of Skardo who annexed it to his principality of Baltistan; and it so remained for thirty years. His conquest appears to have been dictated by purely worldly motives, and was free from the religious promptings of Islamite ambition, and the Budhist religion continued to linger in its old home in despite of its neglect under the new regime. And when the rule returned to the Gyalpo or chief of Ladakh, soon afterwards a recognised tributary of Kashmir, it made no effort to revive from the state of decay to which it had fallen, but seems to have continued much in the degraded form we find it under the Hindu government of Kashmir, to which it was finally annexed in 1834.

From the monastery of Hemis—which has insensibly led me off into this historical digression—we returned to near Changa on the road to Leh, and there turning off to the left followed a rough stony tract at the foot of the hills for six or eight miles up to Matha, where we arrived at dusk—just twelve hours after we set out—and joined the camp of the envoy.

Next morning I accompanied Captain Chapman, and the camp sergeant, on an excursion after some wild sheep, of the kind here called *Shapú*, which had been marked down on the hills to the south of Matha and Stok. We set out at 6 A.M., and turning up a glen above the village followed up a more or less frozen stream trickling down its winding channel for some ten miles or so, and then rose up to a high moorland which formed a basin in the hills. The greater part of the glen was thickly wooded with willow, poplar, and tamarisk trees, amidst which grew the rose and the currant, whilst the moorland, which rose up in long slopes to the snow, was covered with tufts of artemisia and a caryophyllous plant here called *burtsi*. We found some cattle and sheep grazing here, and in the centre of the plateau, near a deep ravine, came upon some shepherds' huts where a horribly ugly and dirty old Tatar gave us a drink of sour milk out of a wooden bowl which was as unwashed as himself.

Our party had dispersed in the glen up various gullies in quest of game, and we all met a little beyond these huts. On comparing notes we found we were equally empty handed thus far, and set out on our way across the moor towards a pass in the hills closing it on the opposite side. When near the top of the rise we came upon a herd of thirty or forty wild sheep, which, watching our detour in different directions to stalk them, set off in a

stampede down the slopes, and away to the opposite side of a deep gully, only one of their number falling to the steady aim of the sergeant. As the day was now well advanced, we continued our way to camp down a long winding defile, without a stick of vegetation along its stream or elsewhere, and at 6 P.M. joined the envoy's camp at Stok.

In our ramblings we came upon the snow pheasant, or *rámchakar* of the Kashmiris, and the blue pigeon of these mountains. We returned to Leh next day after beating up a willow plantation near Stok, and making a poor bag of the blue hare of this country.

CHAPTER V.

Our arrangements at Leh being completed, and intimation of the Sayyid Ya'cub Khan's departure from Murree with the staff of Turkish officers he had brought with him on return from Constantinople having been received, the Embassy set out from Leh in pursuit of its route on the 29th September. Our first march was seven miles to the huts, called *polu*, at the foot of the ascent to the Khardong pass which overlooks Leh from the north. At about half-way the road passes beyond the terraced fields of Shankar Gonpa and the hamlet of Ginglis, and leads across two ancient glacier beds, and the moraines marking their sides and angle of junction, up to a winding gully the top of which is occupied by a small glacier mass.

We camped in this gully at the foot of the pass. Its elevation is about 14,900 feet, or 3400 feet above Leh. The view across the valley at the Kanari range, which separates Zanskar from Ladakh, is very fine, and presents an extent of snowy scenery which we nowhere saw to such advantage on our farther route. At this place we got a mild foretaste of the cold that was in store for us, for during the night the thermometer fell to 15° F., whilst a cutting south wind swept over the camp with a penetrating force, such as we fortunately did not experience on more exposed situations.

In the morning we made the ascent of the pass, and going down a long slope on its other side, camped on the

gravelly fields of the Khardong village, distance fifteen miles. This pass, like that of Diggar on the same range farther round to the east of Leh, is very steep and difficult, and upwards of 17,000 feet high. I stopped nearly half an hour at the crest of the pass to observe the indications of the instruments I had with me. A strong cold wind was blowing at the time, and though we were under the lee of a rock, and raised low walls of snow round them, it was not easy to protect the instruments from circling eddies of cold air. I found the same difficulty at all the high passes, and, unless the operation is conducted with the greatest care, am inclined to trust more to the indication of a good aneroid than to those of a hastily set up barometer, or the results shown by the hypsometer. Under these conditions, it is always difficult to keep the tube of the barometer steady, and one seldom has leisure to wait long enough to allow the mercury to recover from the vibrations thus communicated to it. Whilst with the hypsometer the tube itself immediately above the boiler is so chilled by the cold air, that the steam which blows from it not only does not properly heat it but itself gets chilled, as well as the mercury it raises in that part of the tube of the thermometer which is exposed to the air for the purpose of reading the boiling point; and hence it is that the mercury is seen to range up and down five or six-tenths of a degree before it gives a steady reading. These and other effects of a varying atmospheric influence account for the difference in the observations recorded by different individuals at the same spot, and even by the same individuals at different times.

At the Khardong Pass the barometer stood at 15·464, the aneroid at 15·58, and the hypsometer at 181°·4 F. with the temperature of the air at 28° F. The Khar-

dong range runs from north-west to south-east, and separates the valley of Ladakh from that of the Shayok river. It is composed of gneiss and granite, the debris of which obstructs the path on both its sides with sharp angular rocks.

The ascent being too steep and high for our cattle, their loads were transferred to yaks—called by the Bhots *dong*—of which hardy creatures some four hundred or so had been provided for the purpose. We ourselves also made the passage on the backs of these useful but ungainly brutes, whilst our camp followers were mostly borne over upon their riding ponies.

The *dong* is a steady and sure animal at these great heights, notwithstanding the pranks some of them are apt to play upon the stranger. He is led by a rope attached to a wood ring which passes through the division of the nostrils, and moves with a slow, easy, riggling sort of gait, rising or descending over obstructions with very little jar. They pant distressingly, and grunt unpleasantly much, even making allowance for all they may be entitled to say. They stop to take breath repeatedly, and each time munch the snow, if they don't also dash off to one side for a roll in it.

The descent of the pass on the further side was very steep and difficult, across the slippery surface of a small glacier, down to a pool at the foot of the drop. Many of our followers were affected by the elevation with headache, nausea, and giddiness, so that several tumbled off their ponies and grazed their cheeks and hands upon the rocks and ice.

At the pool we mounted our horses and passed down a gently sloping gully to some *polu* huts on a small turfy flat. We alighted here for breakfast whilst the baggage passed on, and were the while assailed by the

shrill calls of the marmot protesting against our intrusion, or perhaps that of the yaks which had been here let loose to graze. I observed that these strange animals—the yaks—instead of eating the rich peat turf in the bottom of the gully, spread themselves over its rocky slopes to nibble the stunted herbage growing along the snow line.

Continuing our route down the slope, we passed tributary gullies on the right and left, with their upper parts blocked with glaciers, and, descending a moraine bank, came upon the *mane* and *chhorten* which announced our approach to camp, which we presently reached at 4 P.M. The baggage did not all come in till two hours later, having been eleven hours on the road. Much to the credit of Mr Johnson and his Bhọt assistants the march, which is one of no ordinary difficulty, was got over without accident or delay.

The sky had been overcast and menacing all day, but towards sunset cleared somewhat, and the moon and stars shone dimly as we went to bed. In the morning, however, we awoke to find the ground covered with two or three inches of snow, and our camp obscured in a fog. Our departure was delayed till nearly nine o'clock, when we set out in a thick fall of snow. Our route led north-east down the slope of the high beach on which Khardong stands into the boulder bed of its river, where we passed out of the snow.

The stream flows between high banks of gravel and conglomerate, which rest on rocks of gneiss and mica slate. They are fissured by deep gullies which, towards the river, present long slopes of loose debris. The moisture at the top had overweighted this, and loose stones were continually rolling down across our path, and kept us on the alert to avoid them. Our coolies showed the greatest alarm, and hurried along

under the shelter of bushes and rocks as fast as they could. A whole shower of these rolling stones shot over my head whilst passing under a ledge of rock. The coolies about us immediately crouched into the shelter of the bank, and I reined up with them, and then followed them in the scamper across the open bit of ground ahead. I heard of no accident to any of our party from these dangerous self-propelled missiles. At about four miles from camp the rivulet passes through a narrow gap between perpendicular cliffs of a light-coloured crystalline limestone, and beyond it widens into the bed of the Shayok river.

Its course is thickly set with a brushwood of myriçaria, and tamarisk, and rose, and buckthorn, and is crossed three or four times on little rustic bridges propped on piles of turf and boulder. We crossed the Shayok on horseback, with the water well up the saddle-flaps, and then stood to see our little army of followers come over with the baggage. The passage was effected by all in a crowd together very expeditiously, and without accident, though the stream was fully eighty yards across. We then went down the bank a little way and camped at Satti—distance seven miles.

Next day we made a short stage of seven miles down the valley to Tirit, a few miles beyond which the Nubra valley joins that of the Shayok opposite the villages of Diskit and Hundar. The valley is an open river channel between bare hills of schist and granite and gneiss. The river flows in a broad stream upon a broader bed of pebbles and boulders, and is flanked by an interrupted strip of alluvium on either bank. The alluvium is covered with small jungle patches of buckthorn, and tamarisk, and myricaria, interspersed amidst the cultivated fields of the little hamlets which here and there

enliven the scene and complete the picture of its prosperity.

From Tirit we marched to Tagar, seven miles. At half way we left the Shayok, and went up the course of the Nubra river to Tagar, where we camped under the shade of some large trees near the village. Amongst the more common apricot, willow and poplar, I recognised the elm and the elæagnus. The river runs in divided streams over a wide bed of shingle and sand, on which are island patches of buckthorn and myricaria brushwood. The aspect of the valley is much the same as that of the Shayok in this part of its course; but the opposite bank to that on which our route lies slopes steeply to the river, and is scored with a water-line which marks a flood of the Shayok in 1859.

We passed two or three little villages "en route" with a good deal of cultivation about them. The outskirts of the village lands are marked by numerous *latoh* to warn off intrusion by evil spirits. The *latoh* is a round pillar four or five feet high, and is usually built up of mud and stone on some commanding eminence or rock. On its top is fixed a thick bundle of twigs from which stand up long poles, to the tops of which are tied whisps of yak-tail; whilst the faggot of twigs itself is stuck about with the horns of the wild sheep.

The principal crop grown here is barley of the huskless variety, called *grim* or *nas*. It is the staple diet of the Bhot, and much in demand by caravans journeying this way. For their benefit also the lucerne is grown in hedged-about plots, and let out at so much a head for cattle let in to graze. The meal of the roasted barley—called *sattu* in India and *snomphe* here—is, with the solatia of tea and tobacco, the only food of the Bhot on the tramp. For a long march he fills a wallet of kid-

skin with it, and slinging it across his back sets out perfectly independent of inn or hotel. When hungry he sits down at the edge of the first rill he comes to, and filling the *koray* or "wooden bowl" with the flour, adds a little water, and with a very dexterous use of his fingers mixes it into dough, without ever the loss of a grain of the precious meal, which he next manipulates into morsels, and eats with a relish and satisfaction quite reproachful to more dainty mortals. The fondness of the Bhot for this simple food is as great as his attachment to the *koray* (which is veritably his constant bosom companion, for it is never out of his fob, but when in use as a drinking bowl, or dough trough, or porridge pan), and even in these populous parts he makes it the chief constituent of the more varied fare the homesteads furnish.

At this place our camp was overtaken by Mulla Artoc, a messenger of Sayyid Ya'cub Khan to his master at Kashghar, to warn him of his return with the embassy. This man left Constantinople on the 14th August, and after a few days' stay in Egypt landed at Bombay, whence he travelled by rail to Lahore, and thence by horse to this, where he arrived this afternoon—the 3d October. He went on next day towards Kashghar, whence after some days he was sent back by Atalik Ghazi as the bearer of letters of welcome to the envoy, and his own kinsman the Sayyid, and met us at Sanju on the last day of October.

From Tagar we marched to Panamik, twelve miles, and halted there the 5th of October. In about an hour we came abreast of Churasa on the opposite side of the river. It is the residence of the former chiefs of the Nubra district, and has a small palace, fort, and monastery; all very picturesquely perched on some rocks pro-

jecting towards the river from the range of hills behind, and conspicuous objects on the landscape—their white walls shining brightly above the green spread of vegetation below and against the bare rocks of the background.

Further on the road crosses a turfy hollow, white with soda efflorescence. We were informed that 3000 maunds of this salt had been collected here this season for the Kashmir market. It is used by the Tibatans to improve the colour and draw out the flavour of their tea. Copper is found in several spots of this and the Shayok valleys. The ore is worked in the vicinity of Churasa, and there affords employment to a dozen families or so. I was shown some specimens of the ore found in the Shayok valley. It contained some nuggets of the kind called "peacock ore," mixed up with crude sulphate of copper.

Beyond this little soda plain, and about a mile short of Panamik, we came to some hot springs at the foot of the hill on the right of the road. They issue on the surface at several spots on the slope of a high bank of gravel and grit—the debris of the gneiss rocks above—which here rests upon the base of the hill, and are divided into two groups by a ridge of the same debris some eighty yards across. They steam where they issue on the surface, and trickle in thready lines down the slope, depositing a white encrustation of sulphate of lime which has a decidedly tart taste. On some of the pebbles at the points of issue I found a deposit of sulphur. I took the temperature of the largest stream at different points, and found it 155·5° F. at a little pool at the point of issue, 146° F. at 8 paces off, 124° F. at 20 paces, and 90° F. at 70 paces. Another stream close by was 167 F. at the spring-head. All the little streams of the group to the west are conducted by a

single channel, 14 inches wide and 3 inches deep, into a couple of tanks which are enclosed by walls divided into two bathing compartments; whilst adjoining is a small hut used as a shelter by the bathers.

These baths are much resorted to by the natives and by travellers from Yarkand, and are said to be very efficacious in the cure of chronic rheumatism and syphilis. There is a similar set of springs in the hill-side at Changlung, the next stage from this. I found the temperature of three of the upper springs to be respectively, 140° F., 172° F., and 174° F., at the point of issue, and of three of the lower ones, 163° F., 169° F., and 170° F. One of the upper springs issued in a small pool under the lee of a great block of gneiss imbedded in the surrounding grit and debris. The pebbles in the pool were yellow with a coating of sulphur, as was the calcareous deposit on its sides, and a deep subterranean rumbling was heard repeatedly as of the explosion of pent-up air. There was a bathing hut here also as at the Panamik springs.

During our halt at Panamik our yaks and cattle were changed for fresh ones, which had been collected here for us, and then we went on twelve miles to Changlung, a poor hamlet of eight or ten houses—scattered amidst a little oasis of leafless trees and patches of stubble—the *ultima thule* of habitation in this direction. It is a wretched little place at the foot of the Carawal Dawan, and stands isolated in the midst of a long strip of gravel and sand with nothing but bare rocks around. In its winter nakedness and solitude it represents to the traveller a foretaste of what lies ahead, and interposes mercifully as a link between the haunts of man and the regions of blank desolation beyond. And well do I recollect the joyful satisfaction with which on our return journey we

looked down on this very spot from the crest of the hill above. Its humble cabins were concealed by a summer foliage, and set around with a bright carpet of young crops which to our eyes, wearied by the endless wastes of the plateaux we had traversed, seemed a perfect paradise, and we welcomed the sight as a meet emblem of the civilisation we had regained.

We marched from Changlung on the 7th of October, and camped at Tutyalac—twelve miles. The baggage went ahead at 7 A.M., and we followed, after an early breakfast, two hours later. The morning was clear and frosty, and the sky without a cloud. Our path led by a steep zigzag up the face of a high range of granite hills close above the village, and as we set out we saw the crowd of our cattle and followers slowly toiling up the steep like an army of ants. At the foot of the rise we mounted the yaks awaiting us, and under the guidance of their leaders, threaded our way through the long row of their more heavily weighted fellows, and their less sturdy companions in such toil—the mules and ponies. At the top of the steep there is a small ledge of flat land, and then another rise to the crest of the pass.

From this ledge we got a magnificent view of the mountains to the south. The air was extremely clear and light, and the lofty snow peaks, shooting up against a blue sky, stood out with a clearness that revealed more fully the vast extent of the glaciers around them—at this distance the glare of their fresh coating of snow glittering harmlessly.

Beyond the ledge the rise is more gradual up to the Carawal Dawan, or "Outpost Hill." It is the first Turki name we have met, and but an empty memorial of the Yarkand invasion by Sultan Saíd, the memory of

which is thus unwittingly perpetuated by the merchants from that country, for the Bhots here, as elsewhere on this route, have their own names for the several localities, and call this spot Hlasgya. But it bears about it other memorials of weightier import than its mere name to those who frequent it nowadays, and which by their silent testimony tell of the suffering and loss of life this inhospitable region claims as its right. The relics that so plentifully strew the surface here are merely a foreshadowing of what lines the whole route down to Sanju on the other side of the barrier between Hind and Tartary.

Around the stage huts on the top of the pass I found skeletons and bones of horses and yaks in every stage of decay, and amongst them some human bones. And on our camp ground at Tutyalac we found amidst the mass of similar relics the bodies of two unknown men—too far decayed to distinguish between Bhot and Yarkandi, or Kashmiri and Panjabi.

I stopped at the crest of the pass to take the elevation, which I found to be about 14,550 feet. Whilst watching the hypsometer my guide called attention to an eagle soaring overhead, and as my rifle—it was a Henry Express—was close at hand resting against a rock, I raised it for an aim. Just at this moment the eagle turned his eye full on the weapon, and instantly the ball (aimed at his body) went through it. He came down with a tremendous thud, and that was all.

The meek undemonstrative Bhots about the spot seemed quite unconcerned, and expressed no surprise—unless by wonderful prescience they knew it was a lucky hit—at a shot which would have sent an Afghan into ecstasies of delight. No! So great is the difference in their character, that where the Bhot stood still and gaped stupidly, the Afghan would have applauded and

not rested till he had examined the weapon inside and out, and ended by asking me to give it to him. The bird measured 106 inches in the stretch of the wings, and 49 inches from beak to tail—tip to tip.

From the crest of the ridge the path led across a steep slope of loose shifting gravel down to a deep and rocky boulder bed, through which rolled noisily a tributary of the Nubra river, which we had yesterday crossed at its junction with it on the march to Changlung. We now crossed it again by a rickety spar bridge—the last of those shaky but welcome aids to the traveller on this route of torrents and rocks, and the final effort in this direction of man to overcome the impediments of nature—and passing up the opposite bank, camped on a level flat immediately under the glacier from which the torrent issued.

Tutyalac—as the Bhots pronounce the Turdi Aylác or "Enduring Pasture," of the Turki traveller on this route —is merely a camp stage on a small turfy moorland in the midst of the wildest of mountains, which in their rugged nakedness foretell the treeless character of the region beyond. The Bhots call the place Pangdongtsa, which, so far as I understand, means the "Pleasure Ground of the Yak," and if so, his tastes assuredly differ from those of most creatures.

The billowy surface of the glacier was encumbered by a thick coating of rocks and stones impacted in its icy grip, and, as the moon cast its reflected light into this isolated hollow, shone with a silvery lustre, well set off by the dull shades of the encircling rocks, and heightened in effect by the glorious purity of the snowy peaks standing sentinel-like around.

Our baggage did not all come up till past five o'clock, and as the successive batches of yaks came up, they were relieved of their loads and let loose to wander over

their "pleasure ground." In the morning when I rose to record the readings of my instruments, the minimum thermometer under the shelter of my tent verandah registered 11° F. I observed the Bhots, lasso in hand, clambering up the hill-slopes after their unruly beasts, and watched them catch one by one by a dexterous throw of the lasso. This was quite enough for the yak. He stood directly the rope struck the horns, and with its end tied to his nose-ring, was led down prisoner for the day's task before him.

From this we marched to Brangtsa—eighteen miles. It is a small collection of stone-wall enclosures to protect the traveller and his cattle from the icy blasts that blow down from the glacier pass above, and looks down upon the broad bed of the Shayok river, which we here come upon again, as it sweeps eastward with that grand bend it makes round the mass of hills we have crossed from Changlung.

Our baggage began moving out of camp at six A.M., and we followed two hours later. The path wound from north to east and back to north, through a narrow defile bounded by lofty granite mountains, whose peaks were laden with perennial snow, and whose gullies were blocked with glaciers large and small which sloped down on either side of the pass, and presented a scene of wildness and grandeur that is rarely witnessed.

The uneven surface on either side of our rough path was strewed in the utmost confusion with a profusion of rocks and angular blocks of stone, which were barely concealed by the snow everywhere covering the ground; whilst the ceaseless din of the streams pouring over them from all sides produced a confusion of sounds which the noise of our coolies and cattle did not drown.

After two and-a-half hours we came to a small flat

where the defile bulges, and found a camp ground called Sar-thang, where is a pool at this time frozen over. At this spot Mr Johnson had very thoughtfully collected supplies, in case our camp was unable to effect the passage of the glacier beyond, and we took advantage of its convenient accommodation to alight for breakfast. Captain Chapman availed himself of the opportunity to photograph the scene, and despite his difficulties with freezing chemicals produced not the least interesting of the many memorials of our journey which he has by means of that process brought away. The elevation at this spot is about 15,725 feet, and the cold most penetrating, though the thermometer only indicated 24° F. The air was clear, though some clouds were floating over the mountain tops, and an icy wind blew against our faces with cutting force. We were, however, well protected with wraps of all sorts, and the exposed portions of the face were anointed with a glycerine paste which proved very useful in saving the skin from chapping. The glare from the snow throughout the pass was almost blinding, and it was impossible to face it with the naked eye. We ourselves were all provided with spectacles, as were most of our camp followers as part of their kit, but the unfortunate Bhots were left much on a par with their cattle to shift for themselves.

Some of them had goggles much of the same form as ours, and very neatly made of black hair, with a hole in the centre of the gauze opposite the pupil. The majority, however, had none, and supplied the deficiency by whisps of hair which they plucked from the bushy tails of their yaks, and fastened loosely across the eyes. Onwards from Sarthang the path winds amidst sharp rocks and moraine banks under the shadow of an impending glacier whose steep slope against the hill

threatens momentary destruction, and then passing into a narrow groove between the wall of a vast glacier on one side, and the sharp gneiss rocks strewing the base of the hill on the other, slopes down to a spot where the glacier presents a huge split which is occupied by a small pool thickly frozen over.

This spot appears to be the watershed of the defile, for the end of the glacier which here for some six miles fills its hollow slopes away from either side of the split. Beyond this split the path rises on the top of the glacier itself, and for three miles or so leads over its surface. About half way along the glacier I took the elevation under the lee of a great block of stone that had rolled on to it from the heights above, and found it to be about 17,270 feet.

The passage in this part of the pass is always hazardous, owing to the fissures and crevasses in the ice being more or less concealed by snow. We found the glacier completely covered with a wavy coating of soft snow from one to two feet deep. Mr Johnson, however, had tracked out a safe but very narrow line along its border with the aid of his Bhots and yaks.

He gave me an interesting account of the process, in which it seems a remarkable instinct of the yak is exercised more than the intelligence of his Bhot master. Before essaying the passage of the glacier it is customary to drive a drove of ten or twelve yaks across to ascertain the route. These in their way sagacious animals, when urged up the side of the glacier crowd together for a consultation on its edge, and after a good deal of grunting one of them takes the lead, the others following in single file. The leader with his nose down on the snow sniffs and grunts his way cautiously, and when tired falls back for the next in the line to take up the lead, and so on, till land is reached on the other side. The Bhots follow

the track of their brutes, and erect little pillars of snow here and there along the route by way of guide, in case of mists or snow obscuring the track.

By this simple means we effected the passage in safety, though numbers of our cattle floundered in the pitfalls on either side the track. After packing up my barometer and other instruments, I attempted to overtake my companions who had gone on, and in passing a file of our followers, doubled up in their wraps like a bundle of clothes on the top of their ponies, lost the track, and floundered into some pitfall full of loose snow on the side. My sudden downfall created such a commotion in the line that, when I extricated myself, I found three or four others struggling with their cattle in the loose snow on which they could get no firm footing.

Beyond the glacier we descended the bank of a moraine, and passed beyond the snow on to the firm slope of the hill, which led us down the gully to where the Brangtsa huts are, on a ledge overlooking the bed of the Shayok below. The elevation at these huts is about 14,330 feet. It was past 9 P.M. before the last of our baggage arrived at Brangtsa, and we knew that the passage had been effected without loss or serious accident.

This most difficult of mountain passes is called Saser, and is the Sakri pass mentioned in the *Tarikhi Rashidi.* It is a dangerous pass in summer owing to the avalanches and rocks that crash down the slopes on either side, as well as owing to the sudden rise of its numerous torrents by the giving way of some obstructing barrier of rock or ice. It is safest in the winter season, when rock and glacier alike are riveted fast to their holds by the bonds of hard frost. And for the successful passage by such a party as ours on this occasion, as on that of our return this way, we are indebted to the liberal arrangements of

the Kashmir authorities, and the unsparing devotion of Mr Johnson. He had, on this occasion, provided 250 loading ponies and 60 riding ponies, and about 400 yaks, with quite a small army of Bhot coolies for the transport of our camp and supplies, and thus saved our own cattle a very trying ordeal. And to the complete equipment of our men and cattle, provided by the foresight and judgment of the envoy, we owe it that none of us suffered materially from the exposure in this frightful pass, the gaunt carcases and skeletons in which stare ominously at the traveller from every turn of the path. Amongst them was found the body of a man supposed to be a Yarkandi, but I heard of none of our party being left as a relic to add one more to those so plentifully marking the route through the pass. As it was, our cattle came over numbed and bedraggled with icicles which weighed down their tails and manes, and jangled strangely to their efforts to shake them off, whilst our hardy and patient coolies in their scanty and tattered coverings braved everything on their *sattu* (barley meal); and on arrival in camp, with wonderful contentment fortified themselves against the morning's task with refreshing draughts of tea, as squatted around the cheerful blaze of their little camp fires they chased away fatigue by merry conversation. They kept this up so long as the limited allowance of fuel lasted, and then huddling together over the embers went to sleep, with the moonlight sky for their covering, and the noisy murmur of the Saser rivulet for their lullaby, in a temperature of 6° F.

At this place our camp divided. The baggage under the escort of Mr Johnson proceeded by the direct route over the Dipsang plateau towards Daulat Beg Uldi, where we were to join them by the Kumdan route. Our party consisted merely of the envoy and his officers

with a light following in charge of our tents, as the route was very correctly reported impracticable to our camp.

Our next stage, therefore, was to Kumdan, ten miles. We descended to the bed of the Shayok, and following up its stream, which winds in a broad shallow channel upon a wide bed of shingle and pebbles, for two hours, crossing it eight or ten times *en route*, came to a glacier lying right athwart the valley which runs in a north-west direction. We here entered a narrow lane between vertical walls of white marble rocks on one side and bottle green glacier on the other, and for one hour went up its stream, crossing from side to side in continual succession over narrow ledges of the ice, and through the water, by breaks in it, alternately hugging the rock, and sliding against the smooth glacier, till finally we emerged upon the valley beyond; and then, going on for a mile or so, we camped on a raised beach of shingle under a sheer wall of white marble, and in full sight of another great glacier only a few hundred yards ahead.

The spot was evidently an unfrequented one, for it was entirely free of those constant skeletons which mark the camp stages in all this region; whilst the shingle was so loose that it was impossible to fix a peg in it, and our tents were in default kept up by weighting the ropes with big stones.

The glacier ahead of us is seen winding down a long valley of which it fills the hollow just like a solid river, and at its top, many miles away to the west, rises a very remarkable peak—the most prominent in all the landscape. The advance of this glacier obliquely across the valley, by closing its passage, produced that inundation of the Indus in 1842 which proved so destructive along its course down to Attock. The other glacier left behind us

crosses the valley at right angles, and must have struck the opposite side with great force, for I noticed that the rocks were crushed and powdered in some parts, and had masses of the glacier still adhering to them—probably ever since their separation from the main body by the passage forced through by the pent-up waters. It was the projection across the valley of this glacier, and the sudden giving way of its barrier, which produced that inundation of the Indus in 1859 which destroyed the Nowshera cantonment by a reflux of the waters of the Kabul river at Attock—a catastrophe which I happened to witness from the opposite shore.

Our next stage was to Gyapthang, eight miles. The passage of the glacier ahead is wider and easier than that passed yesterday, and leads into a wide, shallow, pebbly, and shingly bed, which spreads away to the north on to an undulating plateau which it drains by several convergent channels. The route by this way is not practicable in summer, owing to the sudden floods from the melting glaciers at the head waters of the Shayok further on. We crossed it now several times girth deep, and with distress to the cattle by reason of the drift ice floating on the current bruising their limbs. At Gyapthang we camped amidst a crowd of horse, and ass, and yak carcases and skeletons in every stage of decay. They filled the sheltered hollows on the river bank—hollows to which we were driven for protection from the blighting south wind, which swept up its wide channel with a force and persistence that explained what the bones told us. I here found our messman had set up his pots and pans under the shelter of three or four carcases, and remonstrated with him on his carelessness in not selecting a more suitable spot. "Where shall I find a better?" he replied despairingly. "The whole place is full of

them." And really he but spoke the truth, for I went around and found no place clear of these horrid remains. Fortunately for travellers, the air here is so dry that the carcases do not putrefy, but simply desiccate without poisonous odour, and thus, whatever the other hardships of this region, they are at least saved this evil.

These remains are to be counted by the thousand on this route, and tell of a woeful loss of life. They are the witnesses of many years, and side by side are to be seen the bleached hides of nobody knows when, and the fresh carcase of but yesterday, with others in intermediate stages during a period of perhaps only a dozen years.

At this place we came upon the tracks of the wild *yak*, and Colonel Gordon went off in quest of them, but without success. It was at this spot that Mirza Hydar (the author of "Tarikhi Rashidi") parted from his companion, the Prince Iskandar of Yarkand (as I have before mentioned), and set out on his adventurous journey by unknown paths to Wakhan; and it was on the mountains just beyond this—probably at the headwaters of the Shayok—that he shot the monstrous wild yak on which his party subsisted during the three days of their perilous journey to the inhabited valley of Ráshgum, as he so graphically describes—a valley which, under the name of Warshgúm, now has for us a peculiar interest as the death place of the adventurous and high spirited explorer Hayward.

The elevation at Gyapthang is about 15,150 feet, and its effects tell uncomfortably on both man and beast. We had felt the disagreeable effects of a rarefied atmosphere more or less all the way from the Carawal Dawan, but here they became more pronounced, and affected a larger number of our party. Availing myself of Dr G. Henderson's experience on his journey across

this region in 1870, I had provided myself with a large supply of the salt he found so useful, and with very satisfactory results, as our further progress proved. I distributed little bottles of this chlorate of potash amongst the members of the embassy, and such of the followers as needed it, and from my own experience can testify to its value in mitigating the distressing symptoms produced by a continued deprivation of the natural quantum of oxygen in the atmosphere. The large proportion of oxygen contained in the salt probably supplies to the blood what in these regions it fails to derive from the air, and thus restores through the stomach what the lungs lose. Whatever the explanation of its action, however, there is no doubt of its efficacy in relieving the dreadful nausea and headache produced by the circulation of an inefficiently oxygenated blood, and no traveller ought to venture across these passes without a supply of this simple remedy in his pocket.

From Gyapthang we marched to Daulat Beg Uldi, fifteen miles. The route goes up the river a little way, and then crossing a wild tract of gravelly hillocks, drops into a tributary channel. From this it rises on to a wide and bleak plateau, which forms the table-land of the Caracoram range. On this plateau we camped, under the shelter of a gravelly bank that limits the bed of the stream which flows down from the Caracoram pass, whose range of black gravel and shale, as the name imports, rises in the fulness of its nudity and desolation right before us.

As we turned away from the main stream of the Shayok, we left behind us a magnificent panorama of glacier scenery, but a touch of the cold wind streaming off from it made one shiver, and think what it must be in winter. Yet a month later this will be the route

preferred by the venturous traders who travel this way, owing to the severity of the *dam* on the Dipsang route. Away to the left, at about six miles off, the Shayok is lost in the vast field of glaciers from which it issues. These come down in three main lines from the north-west, west, and south-west, and unite in one great mass, which fills the wide plain into which the river bed here expands. They appear like rivers set solid in a coating of purest white, and slope down for twelve or thirteen miles from the foot of the lofty snow peaks whence they start. And where they meet they present a vast sea which appears as if suddenly frozen solid in the tumultuous foam of its clashing waves; for here the glacier is thrown into a confusion of billowy projections formed by the crashing of the ice under the lateral pressure of the solid streams meeting from opposite directions.

At Daulut Beg Uldi we were rejoined by Mr Johnson with the main camp. He lost two of his ponies in crossing the Dipsang plateau (our first losses), but brought all his followers over in safety. The Dipsang plain is the highest part of this plateau, and swells up to the south of our position, closing the view in that direction. We crossed it on our return journey, as I shall have to mention in its proper place.

The elevation at Daulut Beg Uldi is about 16,000 feet. It is a singularly desolate and bleak plateau, at this season bare of snow, but set about by low ridges and mounds of loose shales, from 18,000 to 20,000 feet high, on which last year's fall still lingers in thin patches. A very destructive wind is said to blow over this region at times. Fortunately we escaped it, and had only to put up with the evils of a half ration of our wonted supply of oxygen.

Many of our party here were quite prostrated, and appealed to me for relief. "My good man," I said to each as he gave way to the overpowering feeling of careless despair, "your case is no worse than my own, or that of a dozen others about you. Here! Take this salt and put a pinch of it in your mouth now and again, and just put your head on a stone and lie still till the bugle sounds the march." There was nothing more to be done. Perfect rest of mind and body I found were the best remedies, though not always attainable. Even when quietly seated writing, I found my pen every now and again jerked forward by an involuntary sudden gasp to fill the chest and raise the load pressing it. And worse, just as I was going to sleep in the hopes of forgetting the pain that racked my head, and the nausea that well-nigh floored me, I was started up by a sense of immediate suffocation. A few deep but unsatisfying gasps and a reeling giddiness brought my head on the pillow again to doze dreamily awhile, only to start up afresh and go through the same process over again, and so on till the bugle bade me rise. The exertion of dressing —a luxury I henceforward carefully denied myself till we got down to a dressing level—well-nigh finished me, and it was as much as I could do to mount my horse. I ate about three drachms of chlorate of potash on the way up, and at the crest of the Caracoram felt quite well, and alighted to take the altitude. It was thus that I, and many others of our party, passed this wretched time on the plateau of the Caracoram.

I was much amused in the midst of these very unpleasant symptoms by the querulous grumbling of a hardy Afghan, who allowed his sufferings to gain the better of his self-control. He had joined our party in Kashmir as a mule driver, and came to me here in a

very woebegone state, complaining of his head, and stomach, and limbs, and in fact was dissatisfied with everybody and everything. A frame of mind excusable under the circumstances. "I always gave you people credit for undoubted wisdom," he said; "but what on earth has brought you to this God-forsaken country, which even these mean Bhots don't care to inhabit?" "Come!" I said, "you ought not to complain, for you are accustomed to hills in your own country, and should feel quite at home here."

"You are perfectly right, sir," he replied. "We have hills in our country, and proper hills too, with trees on them, by the blessing of Providence. They are ten times higher than these miserable mounds of gravel, and we go up and down them without the smallest discomfort or trouble."

"Well, my good fellow," I interposed, "so much the greater reason for your going up and down these small heights without making such a fuss."

"It is not the height I complain of," he continued. "It is the cursed air of the place. Everybody knows it's poisoned, and what I ask you for is its remedy. There must be something in all those bottles there (pointing to the medicine chest) to counteract it."

I gave him some of the salt and enjoined rest, and he went off to his place, saying, "Yes! I'll take this, and, please God, it will cure me. But this *dam* is a poisonous air, and rises from the ground everywhere. If you walk ten paces it makes you sick, and if you picket your horse on it, it spurts from the hole you drive the peg into, and knocks you senseless at his heels. What else can you expect of such a place? Did not Daulut Beg die here?"

Daulut Beg Uldi "The Lord of the State died," is

the eloquent record of an interesting historical event which singles out this spot from the broad monotonous waste of this lonely and inhospitable region to perpetuate its memory by the impress of a name foreign to the locality, and only suggestive of its character by its expressive termination. This appears to be in accordance with a predilection of the Yarkandis for designating the more fatal parts of the regions they occupy, by the names of those notable personages who may have perished on them. And thus we find isolated spots, otherwise nameless, entitled with a designation commemorative alike of a close to the career of some important individual, and of the ominous character of the locality. Such are Rahman Uldi, Marjan Uldi, Culan Uldi, and others.

The Daulut Beg who has given this spot its name was the Sultan Sa'íd Khan Ghazi, who acquired the final distinctive title so honourable to Musalmans by the *Ghaza* or "Crescentade" upon Tibat—in the progress of which he died—as I have before related on the authority of the "Tarikhi Rashidi."

From that interesting and most valuable record of the history of the Mughal Khans of Kashghar, I derive the following brief account of this Sultan Sa'íd who, after passing the Sakri or Saser glaciers on his return homewards, was hurried on in a moribund state across the Dipsang plain to expire on the spot indicated by the royal title of the Mughal Khans—a title which is still borne by the present Capchac ruler of the country in the Persianised form of Bedaulat. The new associations of the spot, too, are not without a mournful interest to us; for it was on the passage of the fatal Dipsang plateau, from the opposite direction, that our lamented comrade, Dr F. Stoliczka, succumbed to the

hardships of the elevation, and at Murghi, on its hither side, closed too soon a life of invaluable benefit to the cause of natural history and geology.

When Wais Khan was killed—somewhere near Isigh Kol on the upper course of the Chui river—in action against the troops of Mirza Ulugh Beg of Samarcand, he left two youthful sons named Yúnus and Eshan Bogha. They were immediately set up as rival claimants of the throne by opposite factions of the nobles. Those who adopted the cause of Yúnus, then a boy of twelve years, took him to Ulugh Beg to enlist his favour on his behalf, but he sent the young Mughal prince out of the way to his father Shah Rukh at Herat, where he was placed under the charge of a noted scholar of the times—one Sharifuddin Ali Yazdi—to be educated. He remained there for twelve years till the death of his tutor, and then went to reside at Shiraz in Persia, till his recall to his own country twelve years later.

Eshan Bogha in the meantime floated about on the waves of anarchy till he was finally cast aside amongst the Kirghiz and Calmac on the north-east borders of the country. But during the period of anarchy in Kashghar, he so repeatedly raided the Tashkand and Farghana territories, that Abú Sa'íd Mirza recalled Yúnus from his exile, and set him to recover the government from his brother, and reduce the divided Mughals to order.

Yúnus found the country divided amongst a number of rival rulers of whom he could make nothing, and after repeated disasters, finally succeeded in establishing himself at Tashkand as a protegé of Samarcand, and with only a doubtful authority in Kashghar, still divided amongst rival chiefs.

On his death, Yúnus left two sons, named Mahmúd

and Ahmad. Mahmúd succeeded his father at Tashkand, where he had grown up in his court; whilst Ahmad, separating from his father, established himself on the shores of Isigh Kol as ruler of the nomad Kirghiz, and, by his reckless destruction of life, acquired the historical title of Alaja, "The Slayer."

He made an unsuccessful attempt to wrest Yarkand from Ababakar, and then went to the support of Mahmúd at Tashkand, who was hard pressed by the Uzbaks under Shahibeg Khan or Shaiban. Both brothers, however, were defeated, and Ahmad, retreating to Acsu, died there that same winter, 1453–4, whilst Mahmúd betook himself to the steppes to try and secure the government of the nomads. He failed, however, and after five years of varying fortunes returned with his family to Tashkand, and sought the protection of Shaiban. But that conqueror, considering him a source of mischief, summarily executed him and all his family by drowning them in the river.

Ahmad left seventeen sons, of whom Mansur was the eldest, and with Sa'íd, Khalil, Ayman and Babajac, figured most prominently in the events of the country; whilst Chin Tymur, Bosun Tymur, and Tokhta Boca and other sons joined Babur in India and disappeared from their native land.

With this introduction we come to the career of Sultan Sa'íd. At the age of fourteen years he accompanied his father when he went to the aid of Mahmúd. In the fight that ensued he was wounded in the hip, and taken prisoner at Akhsi; but in the following year he was liberated, and taken by Shahibeg to Samarcand, as a noble attached to his court. Shortly after, however, when the Uzbak chief set out on his campaign against Khiva, Sa'íd effected his escape to Mugholistan, and joined his uncle Mahmúd, who was then at Yatakand.

From this he proceeded to join his brother Khalil, who ruled the nomad Kirghiz, and stayed with him four years. During this period, Mahmúd on one side and Mansur on the other contested the government in the steppes with the other two brothers. Finally, Mahmúd relinquished the game, and retired to Tashkand to meet the fate mentioned; whilst Mansur, finding the field abandoned, drove his younger brothers out of the country, and subjugated the Kirghiz to his own authority, transporting their principal camps to Jalish and Turfan.

Khalil and Sa'íd now followed in the track of their uncle, but only arrived at Akhsi to hear of his death, and to be themselves arrested. Khalil was summarily executed by Jani Beg, the uncle of Shahibeg, for an attempt to escape. Just after this Jani Beg was thrown from his horse and injured his head, and Sa'íd being at this juncture brought before him for his orders he gave him his freedom.

Sa'íd at once collected his few followers, and disguising themselves as darveshes, students, and merchants, set out with them from Andijan across the mountains to Caratakin and Badakshan, where he sought shelter in the little fort of Zafar, near the present Panja, and received such hospitality as its owner, Mirza Khan, could afford. For he had been deprived of the fertile valleys to the west by the Uzbaks, and of the highlands to the east by Ababakar, and now led an isolated existence amongst the heretic *shias* of the place, struggling for the bare necessaries of life.

After a stay of eight or ten days, Sa'íd and his fifteen companions set out in miserable plight, with barely a blanket each to protect them from the cold, for Kabul, and on arrival there he was well received, and taken into service by Babur. He stayed here three years, and

on the death of Shahibeg at Marv, in action against Shah Ismail of Persia, he accompanied Babur in his attempt to secure Samarcand.

As soon as Babur had taken Cunduz he sent Sa'id with some other nobles to secure Farghana, which, on the downfall of Shahibeg, had been seized by Sayyid Muhammad Khan, the governor appointed by Yúnus. And on arrival there, in 1510, he assumed the government from him. On the defeat and flight of Babur from Samarcand, Sa'id continued to hold Farghana, and in the spring of the following year set out to visit Casim Khan (son of Jani Beg), the chief of the nomad Cazzac, with a view to effecting an alliance with him on terms of equality. His efforts failed, however, and after enjoying a brief indulgence in *cumis* on the free spread of his native steppes, he returned to Farghana to wait events. Meanwhile he repulsed an attempt made by Ababakar to annex the province. But on the return of the Uzbaks two years later, and the fall of Tashkand to their hordes, Sa'id retired from Farghana to Mugholistan, and from there, whilst the Uzbaks under Suyunjuk were ravaging Andijan, he made a descent upon Kashghar, where Ababakar's frightful oppression had rendered him hated.

Sa'íd drove Ababakar out of the country, and after a campaign of three months, mounted the throne at Yarkand in 1513. In the ensuing winter he met his brother Mansur at Acsu, and recognising his rights of primogeniture, consented to share the country with him; Mansur ruling over the eastern half from Acsu to Khamil or Camol, and Sa'id over the western half up to Andijan.

In the following winter, Sa'id essayed to make good his authority over Andijan, but on arrival at the frontier, finding his troops unequal to the task, he diverted his purpose to a hunting excursion on the upper course of

the Nārin, and returned to his capital in the summer. He next turned his attention to his southern frontier, and set out on a campaign to convert the pagan Sarigh Uyghur who occupied the country between Khutan and Khita. His intemperate habits, however, frustrated his pious resolves, and he was brought back from Khutan in a stupid state of drunkenness, whilst his troops overran the country of the pagans for two months without ever meeting one of its inhabitants.

Following this he was called upon by the Uzbaks to restrain the inroads of his Kirghiz upon the Tashkand frontier, and sent his infant son Rashid with Mirza Khan (my author) to settle these unruly nomads. He failed to do so, and in the following year, Sa'id himself carried an expedition up to Isigh Kol, and dispersing the Kirghiz returned to Yarkand, leaving Rashid to hold the country.

He next, in 1518, made an expedition into Badakshan to support the authority of his governor, whom he sent to hold the country as part of the possessions he had conquered from Ababakar; and on his return thence, in the summer of the following year, he went to Acsu to meet his brother Mansur, and arrange for the restoration of the place from the state of ruin to which it had fallen after its plunder by Ababakar; and on this occasion recognised Mansur in its government.

Two years after this he again went to Mugholistan to check the inroads of his Kirghiz upon the Uzbak borders, and in the midst of his troubles and intemperance, was seized with a fit of remorse for his misdeeds, and proposed to abdicate in favour of Ayman, the maternal brother of Mansur. The priests, however, interfered to dissuade him from this purpose, so he returned to his capital, and established Ayman in the government at Acsu.

Then, in 1523, he again made an expedition into Badakshan to seize the country from the retiring Uzbaks, but finding it already in the possession of one of Babur's sons, and the passes behind him closed, he wintered there, and in the spring returned home re-annexing the eastern half of the country to Kashghar "for ever."

On his return from this expedition he was once more called to the aid of Rashid in Mugholistan, who was now pressed by an invasion of the Calmac. When Sa'id arrived at the Narin river he heard of the death of Suyunjuk in Andijan, and the confusion of the Uzbaks, so he immediately turned off to recover Andijan. He seized Uzkand by coup, and, the people opening its gates, he took possession of Andijan, and annexed the province to Kashghar.

Sa'id now returned to Kashghar to rest awhile from his labours, and, in the interim, in 1527, sent Rashid and Hydar on a *ghaza* against the *kafiristan* of Bolor between Badakhshan and Kashmir. The crescentaders appear to have found the savage infidels more than a match for them, and returned without having effected much, though Mirza Hydar gives a most interesting account of their customs and country.

On return from this expedition, Rashid was appointed Governor of Acsu, and six months later Sa'id set out on that campaign against Tibat which I have before mentioned.

His biographer (Hydar) says he was a mild and just prince, and during the last years of his reign led a strictly religious life; and with a curious illustration of what his idea of the import of the words are, adds that under his rule the country flourished, and peace reigned from Khamil to Farghana!

From Daulat Beg Uldi we marched to Brangtsa,

twenty-two miles. The track goes north-west up the course of the stream we camped on, and along the base of the Caracoram range, over a loose soil of gravel and earth up to the pass, which we reached in three hours. The rise is gentle except at the pass itself, where it is sudden and steep, but short both in the ascent and descent. At the foot of the pass, on the hither side, is a saddle-shaped watershed across the valley, which divides two tributaries of the Shayok; that to the east drains Daulat Beg plateau, and that to the west joins the mass of glacier we passed yesterday on quitting Gyapthang.

The elevation of the pass is about 18,300 feet, and affected our men and cattle severely. Several of the former tumbled off their ponies from the giddiness produced, and some fainted. My own servant fell three times, and the hospital dresser was carried over insensible, but they recovered themselves on reaching the lower ground on the other side. Two of our baggage ponies died on the pass, and two others soon after reaching camp. Previous to leaving Leh all the loads had been weighed and reduced to an uniform scale of 160 pounds for each animal; this had been wisely fixed as the limit of their burthen, and the drivers were mounted on other cattle.

Even with these light loads our hired cattle laboured greatly and moved slowly; and the mules of our fixed establishment, though led over unladen, suffered from the cold and elevation. My own horse, a strong Kabul galloway, though choosing his own pace, showed signs of great distress. His whole body shook under me from the violent action of his heart, and he swayed so unsteadily from side to side, that near the top I dismounted through fear that he would roll down the hill with me.

On the other side of the pass we went down a loose

shingly drainage gully similar to that on the south, and camped at the Brangtsa stage, which is merely a collection of stone walls like the enclosures and huts called Polu on the other side of the Saser pass. As at the other camp grounds on this high land, the surface here was encumbered with carcases and skeletons of beasts of burthen; and on the way down we passed the bodies of two men. The head of one of them was brought to me, but I found it in too recent a state for preservation.

The Caracoram range is here the true watershed between the affluents of the Tarim on the north and the Indus on the south, and on each side is supported by a table-land of swelling plateaux of very similar character as to elevation, soil, and blank desolation.

Our tents did not come in till six P.M., and were put up with the aid of our invaluable Bhot coolies in a fast fall of snow, which commenced soon after we reached the ground.

Next day we marched to Actagh—twenty-five miles. The route leads down the wide shingly bed of the Actagh river, a tributary, or rather one of the sources of the Yarkand river. It drains the broad undulating slopes that spread away to mountain ridges on either side, and at Actagh, which is merely a stage at the foot of a cliff of white clay, forms a single stream.

We set out at 9 A.M. as the snow ceased to fall, and found the inequalities of the country and its wide sweeps of plateaux, which we saw to advantage on the return journey, were wonderfully concealed by the bright glare of the fresh coat of snow that covered the surface. About half-way we alighted for breakfast at the Wahabjilga stage, where supplies had been laid down for us in case we camped here; but owing to the inclement weather, it was decided to push on and get out of this

inhospitable region as quickly as possible; so whilst we rested under the shelter of the walled enclosures here, the baggage pushed on to the next stage. It was 9 P.M., however, before the last of our baggage reached the ground.

At Wahabjilga the river passes through a narrow passage in an outcrop of slate rocks, between approximating ridges which here contract its valley, and then again flows through a wide shallow channel as before. At this place we found several of the "black horned" larks seeking the shelter of the walls, and started a hare which had sought protection under one of the stones lying about. And a little further on, as we resumed our route, Mr Johnson shot an antelope loitering on the flank of our column.

On approaching camp we were met on the road by our comrades of the advance party, who had come to join the envoy here, whilst Captain Biddulph went on to explore the sources of the Caracash river, prior to joining us at Shahidulla.

Captain Trotter and Dr Stoliczka were so metamorphosed in their travelling wraps that we did not at first sight recognise them, and, as they were unexpected, were puzzled to know who the two horsemen appearing from behind a projecting bank, and advancing so boldly upon us from the opposite direction could be, till the welcome voices of their greeting assured us without doubt of their identity, and removed even the semblance of veracity from the circumstantial statements of the Srinaggar gossips, who had indicated this very spot as the scene of our discomfiture at the hands of the banditti of Kanjud, whose natural propensities, according to those "gobemouches," had been stimulated against us by the bribe of a sum large enough to buy their whole country.

Our own disguise must have proved no less strange to our friends, or their inquiry addressed in Hindustani to a passer-by would not have elicited from the camp sergeant, "I am not a native, sir. They are all coming down the road."

We were well met, however, and glad to find that our worthy comrade, and since lamented friend, had recovered from the extremity of his sufferings on the Dipsang highland. We compared notes of our respective experiences, and congratulated each other on our robust appearance and ruddy complexion—an unnaturally heightened colour suffused with a tinge of darkness entirely foreign to the healthy glow, which for me had its own meaning, and told of the combined effects of cold and rarefied air. The elevation at Actagh is about 14,450 feet, and a minimum thermometer placed in the open air, Captain Trotter told me, registered a temperature of 24° F. below zero, or 56 degrees of frost. And another minimum thermometer, set under the shelter of the verandah of my tent, registered on the night of our arrival 9° F., and on the following night 15° F. below zero.

At this place, whilst standing round the camp fire on the morning of our departure, a little landrail appeared at our feet struggling with unsteady gait to reach the embers, whose glow had drawn it from its hiding amongst the stones around. The luckless little wanderer was caught up by Dr Stoliczka at the very edge of the fire, and preserved from self-immolation on this lonesome spot, to adorn with the rest of the natural history collection of this embassy the shelves of the Calcutta museum.

We halted a day at Actagh with a light camp only, intending to double up the next two stages into one, whilst the baggage and main camp went on by the regular marches. The prophesied Kanjudis belied the

Srinaggar tattlers, and gave us a time of undisturbed rest, and in fact, were nowhere to be heard of in the neighhood. We resumed the route next day and found a change of horses at the Chibra camp-ground, whence our baggage, with the exception of a few broken-down cattle, had gone on in the morning. We alighted here for breakfast in a little boulder-strewed hollow, the rough surface of which was encumbered with gaunt skeletons and broken carcases tossed about in spectre-like forms.

The elevation here is about 16,650 feet, and the spot one of the most inhospitable on the broad waste of this fearful table-land. The whole route from Actagh was marked at almost every step by the remains of perished cattle, and what with the cold and the *dam* was one of our most trying marches. And I blessed the envoy's sound judgment which saved us a night of misery on this dismal spot.

Beyond Chibra a little way we entered the snow again —we had left it behind us half way between Wahabjilga and Actagh—and passing up an easy gully very gradually rose to the crest of the Sugat Dawan or "Willow Pass" (though there is not a bush of the kind or any other within miles of the place), which is about 17,500 feet high. On the way to the pass I picked up a snipe on the snow, and in the gully on the other side another. They were frozen hard as stone in a sitting posture, and the congealed humours of the eyes looked like pearls. The descent was steep, first over deep snow and then over broken slate, into a ravine winding between banks of black shale. From this the pass led over some high moraine banks of granite boulders, and crossing the slope of an ash grey schistone hill led down to the bank of the Sugat river, where we camped in a brushwood of willow

and tamarisk a few miles above its junction with the Caracash river—distance thirty miles.

It was here that an amusing adventure introduced me for the first time to our Yarkand allies, of whom we saw so much during our stay in the country. I had lingered at the pass with my instruments, and got belated a mile or two above camp. In the obscurity I missed the track, and got amongst the boulders of the river. My horse stumbled over one of them, and was brought up by his nose upon another, so I dismounted and bid the groom who was with me do likewise and go seek the path.

Meanwhile I called for a response from the camp by a succession of shouts, but all to no purpose with the noisy brawl of the torrent alongside, till my messenger returning reported no trace of a path, though he had discovered a camp fire a little way down the stream. We accordingly made for it, and after a most awkward progress amongst the boulders—whose broad white rotundities shone with a deceptive clearness in the obscurity around, now seeming close under foot, and leading to a plunge two or three feet down, and again seeming as far off, and producing unlooked for jars between chin and knee—came abreast of it on the opposite side of the river. The flickering flames lighted up a perpendicular rock above them, but revealed no sight of tent or man, and all my shouting produced no answering call. So we plodded on our weary way, tumbling here and saving a tumble there, till we emerged on a turfy beach. On this we regained the track, and were going along merrily amongst the tufts of reeds and patches of jangal, when four horsemen suddenly advanced out of another patch ahead, and were immediately upon us in the narrow path.

"Have you seen our camp ahead? And is this the way to it?" I asked in Hindustani, on the chance of

their being some of our people looking for stray baggage. In reply I got a deal of very voluble Turki from all of them at once. What it all meant I have not the least idea, but I caught the words "Doctor Sahib," and at once said, "I'm the Doctor Sahib; shew me the way to camp."

They held a consultation together, which I interrupted in Hindustani, Persian, and Pushto, assuring them of my identity; but to no purpose; they whipped their horses, and shuffled past, muttering some unintelligible jargon amongst themselves.

The rencontre with these strangers had not enlightened me a whit as to the whereabouts of camp, and I saw them going away from the object of their search, so I mustered what Turki I could at the moment collect and threw it after them. The words had a magic effect, the men at once returned, jumped off their horses, brought one forward for me to mount, and excused their not recognising me in the darkness.

My stock of Turki was already exhausted, so I fell back upon Persian, and found two of them understood it well, though the mixture of tongues from me at first quite puzzled them. They now produced a torch to light the way, and as they could not blow it into a flame from their tinder, I assisted them with a lucifer. And thus assured that they really had got the "Doctor Sahib," a point on which the tie of my turban seemed to afflict them with a doubt, we all mounted our horses, and set off afresh. On the way I learned that they had come from Shahidulla to welcome the envoy in the name of Atalik Ghazi to Yarkand territory, and having paid their respects to him on arrival in camp, had been sent by him to look for me; and under their guidance I soon found myself at the mess tent in the midst of our own party, when the envoy formally introduced me to

Yuzbashi Zarif and Yuzbashi Bahauddin. Ibrahim Khan of the police, who had been sent on in advance from India, here joined the camp to pay his respects and make his report to the envoy. The camp halted next day (16th October), and then went the following morning to Shahidulla, where Captain Trotter and Dr Stoliczka and I rejoined it on the 18th October with Captain Biddulph, whom we met in the Caracash valley on our detour to visit the jade quarries at Balikchi. The elevation of Shahidulla is about 11,200 feet.

These jade quarries are situated at the base of the Kuenlun range, which here forms the right or north bank of the Caracash river, and are about twelve miles up the stream from Shahidulla. The excavations extend over several small knolls or spurs projecting from the foot of a high range of gneiss rocks, and are all superficial. The spurs are covered with a loose gravelly detritus, beneath which is concealed the rock in which the prized mineral forms veins of very varying thickness, colour, and quality. The diggings are marked by heaps of refuse about them, but show no traces of anything more than superficial excavation. And in the deeper of these the floor was blocked with masses fallen from the roof and sides. The quarries have been abandoned since the overthrow of the Chinese rule over Kashghar in 1863.

At Balikchi we came upon a herd of six or seven *kyang* or *culán* (wild horse) feeding on the opposite side of the river, and crossed it to stalk them, but they made off before we could get within range. The Caracash valley has abundance of pasture and brushwood, and in its natural vegetation resembles that of Nubra, but it is uncultivated, and uninhabited, except by Kirghiz camps in the pasture season. Its river is a considerable stream, but fordable on a pebbly bottom at most parts during this season.

CHAPTER VI.

THE envoy halted some days at Shahidulla to await the arrival of Sayyid Ya'cúb Khan who, with his following, was being rapidly transported through Kashmir to overtake us, as it was an important point with him that our party should enter the country under his guidance.

In the meantime the two Yuzbashis and Mirza Ya'cúb, the latter an *umara* or "commandant," attached to the court of Atalik Ghazi, who had been sent here by the Dadkhwah of Yarkand to meet and welcome us, acquitted themselves of their duty graciously, and dispensed such hospitality as the isolated position, and empty condition of the locality admitted of. That national institute the *dasturkhwan* or "tray of ceremony" (and metaphorically the "table-cloth," only that it is always spread on the floor), was of course the most important of the tokens of welcome, and consequently our appointed hosts every day, just before the afternoon prayers, appeared at the envoy's tent with their array of trays, and invited us to partake of the hospitality provided.

And we on our part, appreciating the friendly attention, did our duty with a grace which the delicious flavour of the melons, and the welcome sight of the barley sugar "cossacques" with Russian mottoes, rendered easy, despite the uninviting appearance of the hard used trays, and their worse treated contents. The former were the common tea trays of our own country, and by their scanty remnants of lacquer, and abundant bruises and

wounds spoke of a long and rough service in the cause of state hospitality. The latter comprised a variety of fruits and sweets which, from the appearance of most of them, had evidently been neglected, and condemned to pass alternately from the saddle bag to the tray, and from the tray to the saddle bag, without even tempting a hungry guest to bestow his favour upon them. Such were the uncracked walnuts and pistachias, the musty jujubes and elœagnus berries, the dried prunes and the drier raisins, and, as an exception, the little green and grainless raisins, and the sweet almonds mixed amongst them. Such, too, were the various home confections of sugar—the curled "dogs' tails," the porous "sugar bubbles," and the sugar-encrusted almonds, &c. which in their battered state showed proofs of the rough journey they had made to figure before us here, whilst the rock candy, preserved in its neat deal box, stood amongst them proudly in the decoration of its Russian trade marks and addresses.

Round a spread of dainties such as these we daily seated ourselves on the carpet, and with the *bismillah* of our hosts approved the melons and, under cover of commonplace conversation, cautiously tested the merits of the other candidates for favour, till the *allahu akbar* released us from further risk of indigestion.

Here, as the rest of our stay amongst them more fully confirmed, we found that our Andijani or Khocandi hosts were complete strangers to the country they had taken, and knew less of its topography and people as a whole than we ourselves did. Yet the boldness with which they singly, or in twos and threes, went about it on the service of Atalik Ghazi, proved the thorough hold they had of it, and the dread inspired by the name of their master amongst the timid and unarmed peasantry.

Shahidulla Khoja, which gives its name to the locality, is a sacred shrine on the top of a bluff which here projects into the close basin formed by the junction of the Sugat and Kirghiz-jangal (on which our camp was pitched close above the junction) streams with the Caracash river, at the point where it turns round the western end of the Kuenlun range. It is a mere pile of stones, and horns of wild sheep and antelopes, &c. upon the grave of some fugitive Khoja from Yarkand, who was killed here by his Khitay pursuers at the time the Chinese conquered the country, a century or so ago. Though his name is lost to them, his memory is venerated by the Kirghiz nomads of the locality, who have marked the consecrated spot by a small forest of bare poles topped with tassels of wool and bushy tufts of the yak's tail.

Musalman travellers passing this way toil up the slope to repeat a blessing over his tomb, and invoke the nameless martyr's intercession for God's protection on their onward journey. The appearance of this shrine, so like those of their own country, was hailed with delight by our Guides escort, who had not seen so familiar an object since they had left their homes on the Peshawar frontier, and they trooped up to do their favourite *ziarat* without the least knowledge of who the object of their blessing was, or how he came to sanctify this lonely spot on the mountains with his martyr blood. It was enough for them to know that the name indicated the spot marked by their revered emblems as the resting-place of a "witness to the faith," and they incontinently went to perform their pious devoirs.

On the boulder beach under this bluff is a small stone fort named after the locality. It was erected as a precautionary measure by the Ladakh wazir of the Kashmir

government during the disorders convulsing Kashghar on the overthrow of the Chinese rule there, and was held by a small detachment of his troops for a couple of years, when, on the establishment of the authority of Atalik Ghazi, it was abandoned and taken possession of by the new rulers of the country. It now has a garrison of about twenty-five men to protect the road, and control the Kirghiz of the neighbourhood, and draws its supplies from Sanju.

The Kirghiz on this frontier of Kashghar territory are reckoned at three hundred tents spread in different camps amongst the ravines, and gullies, and river courses from Kokyar on the west to Sarighyar on the east. They own a few camels and horses, but their principal wealth consists in their yaks, or *cutás* as they call them, which they employ in transporting caravans over the passes of Sanju Dawan, Kilyan Dawan, and Yangi Dawan, which are more or less impracticable to ordinary cattle.

We saw something of these free and independent gentry during our stay at Shahidulla, and here gained our first experience of life in their *acoe* or "white house" tents, which were of any colour but that designated by the name, and as battered and worn as one might expect in such a place, if not in such a season. And we were provided by them with such supplies as we required, in a manner which —whilst contrasting markedly with our good fare across the absolutely desert region we had come over—showed the poverty of the country, and testified to the unsparing exertions which had been made on our behalf by the Kashmir authorities. We had heard so much on our journey of the eight hundred baggage horses awaiting us at Shahidulla, and of the grand officials who were to welcome us on our arrival there with the delicacies and luxuries which express couriers were daily hurrying from the capital to

the frontier, that our expectations had risen far above the mark of our experience, though the reception in its simplicity was none the less friendly and appreciated.

On the 21st October, owing to the scarcity of provisions, a portion of the camp under Colonel Gordon, accompanied by Captains Biddulph and Trotter and Dr Stoliczka, set out for Sanju under the conduct of Yuzbashi Bahauddin, and Rozi Bai the chief of the Kirghiz here; and on the following day Muhammad Amin, one of Sayyid Ya'cúb Khan's servants, who had accompanied him to India, and returned thence to Kashghar during the summer, arrived in camp with a number of horses for the carriage of his master's and our own camp. He confirmed the intelligence we had before received of the construction of a new set of quarters for the accommodation of the embassy at both Kargalik and Yarkand.

At the close of the next day Sayyid Ya'cúb Khan—or Haji Tora as he is called by his own people—himself arrived in camp, and was received by the envoy attended by Captain Chapman and myself. He dined with us in the evening, and was accommodated in one of our tents, as his own camp had not come in. He is a well-informed native of Tashkand, and, during a residence of four years at the Turkish capital, has acquired more enlarged ideas on the civilisation of Europe than is possessed by most of his people in Central Asia, and with all displays a freedom from prejudice which is the lot of very few of his countrymen and co-religionists.

He left Constantinople on the 14th August, and by steamer, rail, and road, *via* Egypt and Bombay to Lahore and Murree, accomplished the distance up to the frontier of his own country in seventy days including halts. As he well might, he expressed a proper astonishment at the feat he had been able to accomplish by the means of travel common to civilised countries, and,

whilst gratefully acknowledging the favour of the British, and the services of the Kashmir government, and the attentions of Captain Molloy who accompanied him as far as Nubra, in forwarding his rapid progress across the mountains, sighed for the organisation and civilisation he had left behind him, and begged us to bear patiently with the poverty and barbarity of the country he was about to conduct us into.

He gave us some very useful hints, which the envoy subsequently acted upon with the best results for the welfare of our own party, and the honour of the British name. His following comprised a number of European Turks, and amongst them four military officers and a civilian who rode in his suite.

Next morning, the 24th October, we bid adieu to our very good friends Mr W. Johnson, the governor of Ladakh, and Mehta Sher Sing, the governor of Islamabad, who had been appointed by the Maharaja to conduct our party to the frontier. How they carried out the task confided to their charge the previous pages will have indicated, and of the appreciation of their services by the Indian Government they themselves have had handsome proof. For us it only remains to acknowledge with gratitude the many favours received, and none the least that unceasing solicitude which smoothed our path across the highest and most difficult mountains in the world, and even on the desert amply supplied our every want. Here, too, we parted with that little army of Bhot coolies whose willing service and cheerful docility had made them fast allies of our camp followers, though we took on some forty or fifty of them to help us down to the plains on the other side; and with them we changed our carriage for such as could be provided by the Kashghar officials to supplement our own mule establishment.

This last had hitherto been spared to meet contingencies, and now faced the task before it in a state of efficiency which could not have been expected had its drivers and mules been burthened with the toils of the march from Leh.

To convey some idea of what they were spared, and to show the nature of the assistance rendered by the Kashmir authorities in the progress of our embassy from Murree to Shahidulla, I may here mention the total number of the cattle and coolies supplied for our service on this route as I got them from the officials. There were altogether 1621 horses and yaks employed, and 6476 coolies of whom 1236 were dooly bearers. These men and cattle were distributed over the different stages, and kept for about two months on this duty, until the arrival and passage from Murree of Haji Tora and his suite. The average number for each stage from Murree to Srinaggar was forty-two cattle and ninety-two men; from that on to Leh they were 54 and 324 respectively; on to Murgi 135 and 140; and on to Shahidulla 145 and 140.

Our camp going ahead, we set out from Shahidulla a little before noon with Haji Tora and his suite, and marched to Pillataghach, fourteen miles. The route led down the Caracash river through a narrow winding valley by a very rough and stony track, and across a succession of gullies and moraines which interrupt the line of its left bank between small brushwood patches of the myricaria, hipophoe, hololachne, ephedra, clematis, &c. amongst which is interposed a tufty growth of tall reed grass.

We soon discovered that neither Kashmiri nor Bhot coolies had been here to mark out the line of road, or to sweep its surface clear of obstructions, and on arrival in camp our farriers had a busy time of it in replacing,

from the store of spare ones provided, the shoes cast on the road. At three hours we crossed the Toghra Su, a brisk torrent which, as the name "Straight River" implies, comes down a long straight glen on our left. During summer its passage is difficult, owing to the floods fed by the snow peaks at the top of its valley, and sometimes it is altogether impassable. There is an alternative route up the course of the stream to the Kulik pass, which is reached on the third day. It is described as very difficult, and like those of Kilian and Sanju on the same range, must be crossed on yaks to be obtained from the Kirghiz in the vicinity. On the farther side it joins the road from Kilian to Yarkand.

At an hour beyond the Toghra Su we came to Corghan or "Fort." It is a solitary mud cabin enclosed within loopholed walls, and stands on the roadside under the lee of a detached rock which lies in the angle of junction of the Kilian river with the Caracash, and on the top of which are the traces of an ancient castle. Across the road in front of it are some small fields of corn cultivation, and on their border we found a scarecrow formed of the head and fore-quarters of a horse stuck on a pole—an ominous warning to the traveller by this route.

A little beyond we crossed the Kilian Su which comes down a deep glen on the left. There is a summer route by this way to Yarkand. The Kilian Pass is, we were told, crossed on the third day, and on the other side is Khitay Tam, a former Chinese outpost. It is at the head of the valley leading down to Kilian. There are fifty or sixty houses of the Wakhi there. They came from Pamir and Wakhan originally, and are said to have been settled there since forty years ago. They

are *Shia* Musalmans, and speak their own Wakhi dialect and Persian, and do not intermix with the Kirghiz.

Another hour brought us to our camp ground amidst the jangal on the river bank, in a small hill-locked hollow. On the march we started what was thought to be a levret, but on capture amongst the loose stones in whose interspaces it sought shelter, we found it to be a rat of the *lycomis* species.

Our next march was to a spot called Caracoram—ten miles. At an hour and a half out of camp we came to a bend of the river round a projecting bluff, and crossed and recrossed it to regain the track beyond. The passage was difficult, and delayed by several of our cattle falling under their loads, and requiring no small exertion to save them from drowning. The current was running strong over a rough boulder bed, and carried a deal of floating ice, which added to the difficulty of our cattle keeping their footing, and in many instances upset them to their confusion. Our drivers and Bhot coolies had a hard time of it in the water in extricating their charges from the peril of their situation.

In summer this passage is frequently impracticable, owing to the flooded stream. It then becomes necessary to carry the loads by coolies over the bluff itself, and swim the cattle round, as the path is too steep and insecure for them. About a mile lower down the road quits the Caracash valley, and turns up a narrow glen to the left, just beyond the Mazar Mirza Ababakar.

This is a small collection of humble graves of the Kirghiz of the vicinity clustered round a more pretentious tomb, built like them of the clay and stones of the locality. The *Mazar*, or "shrine," is decorated with sheep's horns and yak tails stuck on the top of poles set up around the tomb, and is venerated by the

Kirghiz in memory of the prince who perished here as a fugitive amongst their camps.

The "Tarikhi Rashidi" contains a very interesting history of this successful usurper, and most savage of tyrants —whose name, execrated on the throne, is revered in the grave. Before proceeding to notice the principal events in the career of this remarkable ruler of Kashghar in bygone days, we may here advantageously introduce by way of preface a short account of his ancestors, and cotemporaries on the theatre of his exploits, as derived from the work above mentioned, since it will serve to indicate how largely this country shared in the revolutions and anarchies of its neighbours on the west, and explain how its relations with those principalities, continued down to our day, have led to its conquest from that direction.

The Amir Khudadad, whom I have before mentioned as precipitating the downfall of the Mughal Khans by the surrender of the country ruled by Wais Khan to Mirza Ulugh Beg of Samarcand, was the most noted of the five sons of the Amir Bolaji of Acsu, who rescued the youthful Toghluc Tymur, the heir of Eshan Bogha (not the brother of Yunus of the same name), and grandson of Dawa Khan, from his exile amongst the Calmac of Ila or Zunghar, and, establishing him on the throne of his ancestors as Khan of Mugholistan, in his person restored the rule of the Chaghtay in its native seat.

At the age of seven years, Khudadad, on the death of his brother Tolak, was appointed his successor in the government of Kashghar by Bolaji, who, on the part of Toghluc Tymur, administered the government from Acsu and Kucha to Uzkand and Andijan, including Khutan and Yarkand, on the south, and Atbashi and Kasan on the north. And he held the post during the campaigns

of Toghluc Tymur in Mawaranahar against the rising conqueror Tymur Lang. During the revolution following upon the death of Toghluc, the Kirghiz on the Upper Narin, and shores of Isigh Kol, revolted under the lead of their governor, the Amir Camaruddin, who was the brother of Khudadad. His first act on usurping the government was the cold-blooded murder of all the royal family, except only the infant Khizr Khoja, who, with his mother and a few trusty servants, had been rescued by Khudadad, and sent off to the security of the Badakhshan fastnesses. The incursions of Camaruddin, and his lawless nomads, on the Tashkand territories brought no less than four successive campaigns against his Jatta subjects by the armies of Tymur. In the last of these Camaruddin, who is described as of such enormous size that a child of seven years could stand in one of his boots, perished, and Khudadad, who had during this period kept together the government of the cities of Acsu, Kashghar, Yarkand, and Khutan, now recalled Khizr from his hiding amongst the shepherds of Lob, whither he had been carried from place to place out of reach of the pursuers tracking him on the part of Camaruddin, and set him on the throne at Kashghar under his own guidance as minister.

Under his reign, Khudadad was witness of that final campaign by Tymur which devastated the whole country up to the green pastures of Yulduz, and carried away its population to be scattered over the steppes of Mawaranahar, Irac, and Khorasan. Khizr, on his death, was succeeded by his son Muhammad Khan, the dates of whose birth and death are lost in the troubles of the times, and of whose history little more is known than that he was a contemporary of Ulugh Beg in Mawaranahar, and a bigoted Muslim, zealous in the propagation of the faith amongst

his subjects, so habitually prone to lapse into their former idolatry. He, as the "Tarikhi Rashidi" mentions, converted the ancient Hindu temple (resembling in the massive blocks of its stone the temples of Kashmir) called Tash Rabat, on the pass to the Chadir Kol, into a fortified post, to protect his capital from the incursions of the Kirghiz.

His son, Sher Muhammad, succeeded to the throne, and, even under the wise administration of his maturely experienced minister, found but a life of trouble. His nephew, Wais Khan, rebelled, and with a band of adventurers led a Robin Hood sort of life in different parts of the country; whilst Ulugh Beg on the west, having annexed Andijan, was striving for the acquisition piecemeal of Kashghar also.

It was during these assaults upon the frontier that the Amir Khudadad, leaving his son Sayyid Ahmad, who was afflicted with deafness, and an impediment in his speech which rendered him almost unintelligible, in the government of Kashghar, accompanied the camp of the Khan to settle affairs, and protect the border on the northern steppes. During his absence, Khoja Sharif, one of the city magnates, ousted Sayyid Ahmad, and tendered a surrender of the city to Ulugh Beg. On the arrival of the latter's officers from Andijan, the deposed Sayyid Ahmad retired with his family, and joined his father in Mugholistan. He died there shortly afterwards, and left a son named Sayyid Ali, who now became the favourite of his aged grandfather. He was a fine youth, tall, strong, and bold, and without a peer amongst his fellows in intelligence, and proficiency in field sports.

Whilst here Khudadad received as a refugee a prince of the Tymur family named Mirza Ahmad, who with his sister had fled from the hostility of Shahrukh, the sove-

reign of Herat. Sayyid Ali fell in love with the princess, and on a promise of marriage when their fortunes mended accompanied the returning refugees on their way homeward. On arrival at Andijan, however, the whole family was seized by orders of Ulugh Beg, who forthwith executed Ahmad, married his sister, and cast Ali into prison at Samarcand.

A year later, when Ulugh was going to visit his father at Herat, he released Sayyid Ali, and took him in his suite to show Shahrukh a specimen of the sort of men he had to deal with on the frontier. On the march, however, he was so alarmed at the dangerous equipment of his Mughol captive, and had such uneasy doubts lest one of his arrows, the length of which was sixteen palms, should find its way through his own body, that he sent him back from Carshi with secret orders to the jailer at Samarcand to kill him on arrival.

But Sayyid Ali, suspecting the fate reserved for him, effected his escape on the road, and in the guise of a darvesh returned to his grandfather in Mugholistan. Here Khudadad, fearful of the revenge of his pursuers, sent him out of the way to join the robber band of Wais Khan, who was at this time in retreat amongst the Calmac of Lob and Katak. He was well received by Wais, who gave him his sister Oron Nishin to wife; and, as the historian records, Sayyid Ali brought down two stags with his bow for the wedding feast.

From these grounds Wais and his band shifted their camps to Turkistan, at the opposite extreme of the territory. The ruler here was Shekh Nuruddin, son of Sarbogha the Capchac. He was at enmity with Sher Muhammad, and therefore welcomed his rebellious nephew, and, by way of cementing an alliance, gave his sister Sikanj Khanim in marriage to Wais.

The uncle and nephew were here continually at war, till, on the death of the former, the other succeeded to the government. His rule, however, was one of such utter discord, and the Tymuris were getting such a fast supremacy in his country, that Khudadad, now arrived at the ripe age of four score and ten years, disgusted at the obstinacy of Wais, invited Ulugh to take possession of the country. He met the venerable Amir on the upper course of the Chui, and taking him back with him to Samarcand gave him an honourable escort thence to Mecca. From this, having closed a beneficent and unusually long career with the pious duties so dear to the Muslim, Khudadad went on to Medina, and dying there, was buried in the sacred precincts of the Khalif Uthman's sepulchre.

On this occasion of Ulugh Beg's visit to the Mughol country, Wais Khan and his nomads dispersed into the trackless steppes; but on his departure they returned to renew their wonted excursions on the Andijan frontier. This led to the despatch of an army from Samarcand against them, and to the death of Wais in one of the first actions with the enemy. He left two sons, Yúnus and Eshan Bogha, whose history I have before alluded to.

Amongst the nobles who supported the claims of Eshan Bogha to the succession was Amir Sayyid Ali, who, on the succession of Wais to the throne, had been granted the government of Khutan, in reward for his services in the wars he waged against the Calmac. He now, on the establishment of Eshan Bogha as Khan, got permission to recover the government of his ancestors, which, during the fourteen years since the expulsion of his father Sayyid Ahmad from Kashghar, had been held by the Doghlat officers appointed from Samarcand, so far as concerned Kashghar and Andijan, whilst the cities

of Turfan and Acsu had fallen into the hands of his brothers and nephews.

He first seized Acsu—held by two of his brothers whom he killed—and then attacked Kashghar, but was repulsed. He returned to the assault the next harvest with a like result, and on the third attempt took the city. He now brought Eshan Bogha down from the steppes, and set him on the throne at Acsu, and himself administered the government as successor to Amir Khudadad.

The Mughol nobles, displeased at this arrangement, dispersed to pursue their own designs, and anarchy soon spread all over the country. Meantime Eshan Bogha invaded Andijan and seized its fort, but was bought off by Samarcand. His incursions on this frontier were so frequent now, that Abu Sa'íd Mirza, the successor of Shahrukh in Khorasan, sent his brother Yúnus to take the country from him.

When Yúnus arrived in Mugholistan in 1455 with his Khorasan contingent, he was joined by some of the border nomads, and advanced against Kashghar, which was held by the now aged Amir Sayyid Ali. Eshan Bogha, who was at the time with his Jatta nomads in the Yulduz valley, at once hurried to his assistance, and the invaders were repulsed with loss. Yúnus was now deserted by all his following, and returned to Abu Sa'íd in a state of penury, attended only by a single Calmac who was faithful to the last, and consented to become a slave that his empty-handed master might approach the king with him as a present.

Abu Sa'íd afterwards discovered this, and liberating the trusty Calmac, sent him to join his master, whom he had once more established on the Tashkand frontier to watch his opportunity for a renewal of the effort to recover the throne of Kashghar.

Yúnus remained at Banikand till the death of Sayyid Ali in 1457, when he again advanced into Mugholistan, and established himself there till opportunity should present for making a descent upon its capital. Sayyid Ali had left two sons—namely, Saniz Mirza by a Jaras wife, and Hydar Mirza by Oron Nishin, the aunt of Yúnus.

According to Mughol custom Saniz, the eldest, succeeded to his father's office. He transferred his residence to Yarkand, and provided for his brother by giving him the government of Kashghar and Yangi Hissar. Hydar was married to a daughter of Eshan Bogha, and his sympathies were consequently on that side; and on the death of Eshan he allied with his son Dost Muhammad.

Saniz, on the other hand, favoured the cause of Yúnus, and calling him to his aid, with his assistance drove Hydar to quit Kashghar and join Dost at Acsu. Whilst at Kashghar on this occasion, 1461, Yúnus married Shah Begum, the daughter of Shah Sultan Muhammad of Badakhshan. She was the mother of his sons Mahmud and Ahmad. Saniz was killed by a fall from his horse after a rule of seven years as a dependent of Yúnus. Hydar, aged seventeen years, on this seized Kashghar, whilst Dost made an unsuccessful attempt to secure Yarkand, whence, however, he carried off the family of Saniz—the widow Jamak Agha, whom he married, and her sons Ababakar and Umar, and a daughter. On his return homewards he plundered Yangi Hissar, an act of hostility which sent Hydar over to the side of Yúnus, and on arrival at Acsu married his sister to Ababakar.

Dost Muhammad by his eccentricities, violent temper, and outrageous acts, soon estranged his best friends, and frightened Ababakar to seek refuge with his uncle at Kashghar. He died after a course of seven years of

violence and licence, in 1468, and Yúnus immediately pounced upon Acsu, whence his infant son, Kabak, was carried away to Turfan, whilst the second time widowed Jamak Agha escaped to Kashghar, and became the wife of Hydar, to whom she bore Muhammad Husen, the father of the author of "Tarikhi Rashidi." Yúnus now received the submission of Hydar, and keeping him in the government of Kashghar, himself returned to the steppes of Mugholistan, owing to the aversion of his nomad supporters to the restraints of a city life, and ruled there for several years.

Meanwhile at Kashghar Hydar's last wife, Jamak Agha, was exerting herself in forwarding the interests of her eldest son Ababakar, who was now grown up a tall and powerful man, and had become a favourite amongst the courtiers on account of his bravery, and skill in the use of the bow. She persuaded Hydar to dismiss his most influential nobles from court, and by one device and another succeeded in detaching his best friends from him, and attaching them to the cause of Ababakar, who soon fled from Kashghar with a following of three thousand of the best men in the country, and, seizing Yarkand, allayed Hydar's wrath by promising to hold the place in subjection to him. He was presently joined by his brother Umar, and they set out together to take Khutan, the government of which was held by their kinsmen, the descendants of Khizr Shah, who had been installed there by his father, the Amir Khudadad. On the way Ababakar, becoming jealous of a possible rival, deprived his brother of sight, and sent him back to Kashghar, and advanced on his enterprise unfettered. His object failed, and he returned to Yarkand to prepare for another attempt, in which he carried the place by a piece of treachery which it seems is common to the

country. The ruler was invited to swear to terms of peace on the Curan, and whilst so engaged was set on and murdered together with his followers.

After thus securing Khutan, Ababakar subjugated the hill tracts to the south by a succession of excursions up the courses of its several streams, and on his return to Yarkand essayed an expedition against Yangi Hissar. Hydar came out with a numerous rabble to oppose him, but was driven back with discomfiture, and at once called on Yúnus to aid him. On his arrival they attacked Yarkand with their conjoined forces, and fortune again declaring in favour of Ababakar, they were put to flight in disgraceful panic.

Yúnus vowing condign vengeance, retreated to his steppes, and next year, 1479, returned with an immense gathering of his Mughols, and proceeded with Hydar to invest Yarkand with 90,000 men. This army fared worse than the first, and Yúnus following the flight of his terrified nomads, was joined at Acsu by Hydar with his family from Kashghar, which, now abandoned, fell into the hands of Ababakar.

Yúnus and Hydar wintered at Acsu, and in spring went to the steppes to recruit their forces for a final attempt to crush Ababakar. In the summer, however, Yúnus was called off into Andijan to mediate between his warring sons-in-law, Umar Shekh (father of the celebrated Emperor Babur) of Farghana, and Sultan Ahmad of Samarcand, and, entangled in the affairs of these countries, finally established himself at Tashkand; whilst Ababakar, left to himself, consolidated his authority over his conquests from Khutan to Kashghar, and taking advantage of the confusion produced by the Uzbak invasion of the western half of Badakhshan, advanced and seized the eastern half of the territory, which he an-

nexed to Kashghar. This was twelve years before its conquest by Sa'íd. Ababakar also greatly improved Yarkand, which he made his capital, with handsome mansions, and gardens, and strong fortifications.

Whilst Yúnus was engaged in the politics of Andijan, his son Ahmad, or Alaja, retired to the steppes to possess himself of the rule over the nomads there. Having done this, he in 1499 turned his arms against Ababakar, and seizing Kashghar, wintered there. His attack upon Yarkand in the ensuing spring failed, and he was driven back to the steppes in disorder.

On the death of Ahmad two or three years later at Acsu, his son and successor Mansur, aged sixteen years, quarrelled with his younger brothers as to the division of the heritage, and one of them appealing for aid to Ababakar he marched against Acsu. Mansur retired before him to the steppes, and the invader, seizing the place, plundered the treasures accumulated by Ahmad, and, dismantling the fortifications, returned to his capital. After this, when Sa'íd, returning from Kabul with Babur, was sent to take possession of Andijan, Ababakar, seizing the opportunity of the confusion there, invaded the country to recover it for Kashghar, as part of the government of his ancestor Bolaji, but he was defeated, and compelled to beat a hasty retreat. He was so enraged at the failure of his troops, that, under the accusation of treachery, he executed more than three thousand of them with most horrible tortures and mutilations.

On Sa'íd's expulsion from Andijan a few years later, he revenged himself on Ababakar by that invasion which gave him the country, and relieved its people from the cruelties of their heartless ruler. Ababakar himself was so mistrustful of the loyalty of his subjects that, on the approach of his enemy, he razed to the ground the

ancient city of Kashghar, and hastily raising the fortifications of the present city a little higher up on the river bank placed a garrison in it, and himself retired to Yarkand with the entire population of the destroyed city.

His newly built fortifications were immediately abandoned to the invaders, and when Yangi Hissar fell shortly after, Ababakar, leaving his son Jahangir to defend the place, quitted his capital, and fled with his treasures to Khutan. His son, in place of defending Yarkand, gave the city up to plunder, and fled with what he could lay hands on after his father.

The one perished miserably, after wandering about the desert mountains of Tibat, abandoning his loads of treasure at the different steeps as his cattle died under their weight, and casting his hidden store of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds into the torrents across his path, through fear the knowledge of their possession might be the forfeit of his life; whilst his followers, foreseeing the end, plundered their charges, and gradually dropped off to share the spoil, and to fish out of the stream the sparkling gems thus cast away.

Worn with fatigue and hunger, the friendless fugitive, on the approach of winter, sought shelter from the cold blasts of the Caracoram plateau in the hollows of the Caracash valley, where his hiding was betrayed, and he was overtaken and slain at the entrance to the pass we have presently to go over.

The other, trammelled with the quantity of his plunder, was overtaken at Sanju and consigned to prison, where he was subsequently executed for plotting a revolt. And so ended with father and son the rule of the Amirs of Kashghar, who derived their rank and power through the military system first organised there by Changiz. The author from whom I have drawn so largely in these

pages gives a frightful picture of the cruelties and tyranny of this Ababakar Mirza. He killed several of his own children for trivial offences, and condemned his relations, male and female alike, to revolting tortures and deaths. Whilst as to his officers and subjects, their lives, and persons, and property were at the whim of his despotic will; and so great was the terror inspired by his capricious judgments, that the relations of society were destroyed, and no man trusted his neighbour, or child his parent. He organised a system of prisoner gangs, recruited from both sexes of the people on frivolous pretences, for the purpose of exhuming the treasures buried under the ruined cities in the desert. Many thousands were thus employed during all seasons under a most rigorous discipline; and the stores of wealth and gems thus collected were hoarded in his treasury, to be finally cast away in the torrents of the mountains.

Yet, notwithstanding this character for cruelty, trade flourished during his reign, and *Islam* prospered. Its law, in fact, was taken as his guide, and made to suit his will, under a system which the priests very soon learned that they dare not resist, except at the price of life, or torture worse than death.

Such is a short summary of the history of the man who, four hundred years ago, seized the western half of Kashghar to convert its soil into a garden for himself, and its people into the slaves of his will; and who, after a rule of nearly half a century, ended his career as a hunted outcast on the spot which has drawn us from the path of our journey for this historical digression.

At Mazar Ababakar Mirza the road quits the valley of the Caracash, and turns to the left up a tortuous gully, which winds down from the north with the drainage of the hills about the southern slopes of the Sanju Dawan.

We found the path through it very steep, narrow, and rough, and difficult of passage, owing to the repeated crossings of its torrent, which was at this time a solid mass of ice, smooth and slippery as ice is known to be. After ascending about two hours we came to a landslip which blocked the gully, and clambering over its great angular masses, and sharp edged fragments, at a few steps beyond passed on into a turfy lane which lay dark and gloomy before us between high walls of perpendicular rock. This is Caracoram camp ground. It is a tight strait in the mountains, and is between two and three hundred yards long by fifty or sixty wide. We crowded our camp on the narrow strip of turf which edged the little stream that trickled from side to side down its slope, and during our short rest here experienced in a new form the incidents and hazards of travel amongst these mountains.

The character of the ascent from the river up to this spot is peculiarly wild and dismal. Yet it is a mild representation of what the morrow showed us further on. The mountains rise up aloft in overwhelming heights of the blankest nudity, and their rugged rocks frown upon the narrow clefts that wriggle down amongst them, with a look of menace which the masses of fallen debris that here and there choke the passage, and everywhere encumber it, tell the nature of. The unmitigated asperity which meets the eye from every side is oppressive by its very monotony. There is no variety in the aspect of the scene, nor any vista that opens out a prospect of escape from its toils. It is schist, and shale, and gneiss on all sides, and everywhere equally bare, and equally repulsive. The sense of isolation produced by the vast mountains closing in upon the traveller, step by step, as he progresses, warns him against delay upon their crumbling

precipices, whilst the streams, fast becoming solidified in their rough beds, speak to him of the rigour of the advancing season, which has already destroyed what scanty vegetation found soil enough to sprout on, and tell of at least one cause of the sufferings of the caravan cattle driven this way.

This freezing of the watercourses on the higher elevations is not the least of the causes which destroys the cattle in such numbers on this route. Added to their other toils these doomed creatures have often to journey a whole day without water, for though their drivers can melt enough ice to cook their own tea, they have not the fuel to dissolve any for their cattle till they reach the larger streams on which the camps are usually pitched. At this Sanju Pass there are stages on either side of the ridge, where, in the depth of the winter, no water is procurable for the cattle from this cause.

Our cattle had a very toilsome journey this day, and, though the distance was only ten miles, did not all arrive in camp till seven o'clock, when darkness fell upon the scene with a gloom befitting the occasion. Our stay at Shahidullah had exhausted the resources of that thinly peopled locality, and the passage of our advance camp by this route a few days before us had reduced the limited stock of fuel and fodder stored here to a minimum. Consequently for the first time on our long march we were put on "short commons." Fortunately our cattle had been well cared for, and spared as much as possible on the march to the frontier, and were now in the best condition to face such a temporary hardship, though it but ill fitted them to cope with the difficulties the morrow brought upon them.

The elevation of this place is about 12,050 feet, and the cold was severe, though the thermometer under the

verandah of my tent only registered 10° F. During the night we were disturbed by the combined effects of this frost, and the wind sweeping through the gap we occupied. The dark, and absolutely straight walls of rock which rose on either side of us were split and fissured with a succession of explosive sounds that jarred ungratefully on the ear, to be followed by the crash of falling fragments overbalanced from their insecure lodging above by the force of the wind. Some of these fragments rebounding from the loose rocks below—their predecessors in fall—injured several of our followers and cattle, and amongst the former my groom, who did not recover from the lameness thus produced for eight or ten days.

At this place Haji Tora received a letter from the Dadkhwah of Yarkand, and with it, as a present for the envoy, a handsome fur-lined *juba* and *tilpac*, in which, according to the customs of the country, as acknowledgment of the compliment, our chief was presently robed. The bright colours of the flowered silk cloak, as its loose folds hung from his manly form, and the fresh green of the velvet cap, though more suited in outward appearance to the elegancies of the Tatar court than to the rough realities of the spot, had within them what was a comfortable protection from the keen severity of the winter air in Tatary, and the Dadkhwah in the selection of this expression of goodwill showed a judicious regard for the conventional and the practical combined.

Our next stage was across the Sanju Dawan to Gachaka—eighteen miles. We set out at 9 A.M., and went in a north-east direction up a narrow gully which winds as a deep groove amongst mountain walls of bare rock—lofty, jagged, broken, and irregular, presenting a scene of the wildest character with never a feature to soften its harshness. In three quarters of an hour we came to

a great landslip which blocked the gully as with a barricade. It was a whole bluff fallen away from its parent hill, and lay piled up as a huge bank with the ruins of its downfall.

Our road—if such it can be called by which we took our horses scrambling, and climbing, and tumbling over this pile of rocks, here dropping into a breakleg fissure between sloping stones, there passing over the carcase of some baggager who, when he could no longer serve his master, left his body to fill a hole and smooth the way for a following comrade in toil, and elsewhere lying across some slanting rock, as insecure in its fixture as the surface it offered for passage—at this spot became almost impracticable, and the number of carcases strewed about its inequalities bore evidence of its difficulty.

Fortunately it is not of great extent, and leads beyond to an easy bit of road which winds up the course of the stream, at this time solid ice and slippery as it is steep, to a spot where its channel divides to receive the drainage of two sweeping slopes of the Sanju hill which here meet by narrow outlets to form a tight little hollow. This spot is called Zakongra by the Kirghiz, after the name of its rivulet, and it is also called Caracoram, from the dark colour of the debris of its rocks, and it is the first stage at the foot of the pass on this side. We alighted here for breakfast, and found a caravan of Bajawar Afghans loading their cattle, and driving them off one after the other to find their way down the gully we had come up. They had about sixteen horses laden with *charras* (resin of Indian hemp) which they were taking from Yarkand to Ladakh, and had found a comfortable shelter for the night under an overhanging bank of conglomerate, which here blocks the entrance to the Sanju Dawan slope.

Our baggage and camp had left the ground two hours before we set out, and was conveyed on the horses and yaks provided by our Yarkand allies; our own mules, one hundred and ten in number, being reserved to meet contingencies. During our halt for breakfast, the stragglers, and last out of camp came up and passed on, and we congratulated ourselves with the promise of having all clear over the pass before us.

At about noon we mounted the yaks reserved here for our use, and resumed our route. A few paces across the little Caracoram hollow brought us to a steep gap in the rocks, only wide enough for one laden mule to pass at a time, and beyond it led up through a wider passage between high banks of schist to the long slope at the top of which is the Sanju pass.

The scene which now burst upon our view is one not easy to describe, still less to forget. Immediately on either hand, like the portals of a gate, stood bare banks of silver grey slate which gently spread away on each side into the slopes, that inclining together formed the theatre of the spectacle they limited. And immediately in front commenced that gentle rise over slabs of slate debris—the natural dark hue of which was lost in the bright sparkle of its abundant mica—which led at once on to the field of our vision.

Here, at the foot of the ascent, one step took us from the tiresome monotony of the bare rocks behind with all their dulness of hue, on to the snow which overspread all before with a white sheet of the most dazzling brilliance. On the left and on the right it spread with uniform regularity to the crests of the bounding ridges in those directions; whilst in front it rose up as a vast wall, whose top cut the sky in a succession of sharp peaks with a clearness of outline rarely witnessed. And above

all stretched the wide expanse of heaven with a depth unsearchable in the speckless purity of its azure, and with a calm such as often precedes the storm. Wonderful was the scene!

I stopped awhile to gaze upon its sublimity, and as my eyes turned from side to side, and followed the circling of the white eagles as they floated majestically over the pass, like sails upon a bright blue sea, they were attracted by something which immediately turned the current of my thoughts. I saw at the top of the pass, at a narrow gap between two sharp peaks, a small knot of black figures moving about the spot in commotion, and from them I traced a long, dark, zigzag line, motionless and still, right down to the foot of the steep. A few minutes brought me to the tail of the column, and I learned that our camp and cattle were all stranded here, nobody exactly knew why—except that a caravan coming from the opposite direction had met the head of their column at the top of the rise. A slow and tedious climb, now on foot and now on my yak, past the long array of standing cattle, took me to the top. Here the envoy and Haji Tora were superintending the passage of our caravan from a narrow ledge of rock at the very crest itself. I found a perch on a projecting rock just above it, and took the altitude by the hypsometer and found it about 16,300 feet. The sky was beautifully clear, and the air light, still and frosty; and the view of the snowy ranges, with the multitude of their sharp jagged peaks, very fine. But an affair of more moment now claimed the attention. For about thirty paces from the top of the pass the rock was coated with sheet ice, and at so steep a slope that no animal could pass it without aid, so slippery was its surface. Steps were now cut in the ice with picks, and laid with blankets and

behind, and passed on through the narrow gap at the crest to find their way as best they could down the other side. The process was slow and attended by many accidents, for the cattle were so numbed by standing for hours in the snow, that their limbs had lost much of their proper activity. One of our mules, slipping from his narrow footing, rolled down the slope on to a zig of the path below, and so injured himself that it was necessary to shoot him there, and shift his gear to the back of another. A second fell in the passage of the ice at the top, and with such a jerk that the Kirghiz lost hold of his bridle, and he rolled down the precipice "tail over tip" in a most extraordinary fashion, bounding off and rebounding from the covered rocks in his way with a force enough to smash every bone in his body. Indeed, as his legs flapped about like flails, and his neck doubled under his turning body as it went rolling down, we concluded such was already the case. But to our astonishment, when he was stopped in his frightful fall by a small ledge on the hillside some four hundred feet below, he struggled a few moments to right his inverted body on the snow, and regaining his feet shook himself straight, and looking around instinctively made across the snow to join the line of his comrades, the lower end of which was close by. The poor brute was so cut about and injured, however, that he died a few days after.

After two hours of this labour, about a hundred of our cattle had been thus passed over, leaving double the number still standing on the zigzag awaiting their turn, when all of a sudden a squall of wind from the north enveloped the country in clouds, and drove fine particles

It was not a time for hesitation or delay, and the Haji leading the way we followed. A few steps took us through the gap at the crest; it is only wide enough for one laden mule to pass at a time, and revealed to us the descent down which our route doubled its way. It was like—the simile is not at all far-fetched—a white board set at a sharp angle against a wall, and was strewed on each side the path with the wreck of our camp. The path itself, which went down in steep sharp zigs, was frozen hard, and was so slippery, that the cattle, here without drivers, crowded together at the turns, till the pressure of others coming on from above dislodged them on to the snow on either side, or pushed them on to the next turn of the path further down.

Our yaks had been kept in attendance a little way down the slope, but in the confusion and noise of the storm were so restive, that their footing on the ice was almost as unsafe as that of the other cattle, and we consequently preferred trusting to our own natural supports to carry us to some less steep ground. How the others got down I don't know, though I have a very vivid recollection of the manner of my own descent. I had on a pair of treble soled shooting boots studded with nails, which I found usually gave me a secure hold on slippery rocks and ice, and therefore essayed to pick my way cautiously down the path. I had hardly cleared the first turn, when a mule, pushed on from above, came sliding after, and knocked me from the path. And away I went with giant strides down the steep, till the sight of an upset mule in

front of me, frantically pawing the air in his efforts to gain his feet, instinctively caused me to fall on my back; and I was speedily brought to a stop with my feet against his ribs. An unceremonious plant which proved of mutual advantage, inasmuch as it somehow enabled the unfortunate brute to recover his feet just as a couple of our Ladakh coolies, abandoning another they were close by setting loose from the load burying him under his fall, came to my aid. I went on again picking my way amongst the sprawling cattle—here still in death, and there struggling madly to free themselves from the entangling ropes of their fallen loads—and amongst the scattered tents, and boxes, and gear strewed about whereever some obstructing rock had stopped their roll, now sinking knee deep into some pitfall, and then tripping over some loose balanced stone concealed by the snow, till I passed from the steep on to a broad slope, where, in a hollow under the shelter of a great shelving rock, I found a party of Afghan merchants who were delayed here by our occupation of the pass. They were refreshing some of their countrymen of our escort and following with the pipe of friendship, and I stopped to learn their latest news from Yarkand. Just at this moment a tremendous crash drew our attention in the direction of the pass, and an indescribable scene met the eye. Its upper part was concealed in a thick mist, from the edge of which were seen men, and cattle hurrying, and tumbling down the steep in a confused crowd to right themselves, and pick up the pieces as best they could, on the slope where we stood. Whilst looking, another avalanche, some hundred or hundred and fifty yards to the right of the pass, came thundering down its side, and rolled away to a hollow on the left just beyond our position as we faced the pass.

Amongst the others who were now passing on down the slope, were three of the Turkish officers who had come with Haji Tora from Constantinople. They were numbed, famished, and frightened, and, having lost their horses on the pass, were on the look out here to recover them. They mentioned having passed my horse and yak coming on together close at the foot of the steep. So I waited their arrival, and then went on down the slope in the hope of getting a shot at some of the snow pheasants which are said to abound in this locality. I saw no trace of them, but hurrying on, got some specimens of the snow bunting on the way.

At the foot of the steep, the ground slopes gently, and spreads out in undulations up to the hills on each side; and being more level, the snow lay deeper on it. I here returned to the path to mount my yak, and met one of the Turks whom I had left at the foot of the steep. He had annexed a yak allotted to another, and, on its master claiming his own, was left here to trudge it on foot. I found him seated on the snow wringing his hands, and crying *Ya Allah, Ya Allah,* in helpless despair. His nose and cheeks and knuckles were fissured by deep, bleeding chaps, as if scored with a knife, and altogether he looked a very pitiable object, and was so bewildered that he was careless to control the fluttering of his loose robes in the breeze. He looked up at me with a woebegone countenance, and sighed *Ya Allah!* and with a desponding roll of his head from side to side lulled himself with a repetition of *Fana! choc fana!* "Dreadful! very dreadful!"

I could not help laughing at his droll expression of misery, and some very animated but unintelligible references to Stambol, which I interpreted, however, to mean that "Constantinople was a much better place than this,

and that he was a fool to leave it." I bid him cheer up, and giving him a good dose from my brandy flask—which he disposed of like a Christian—mounted him on my pony, a hardy and spirited little animal I had selected from a batch provided for us by Mr Johnson at Nubra.

The impetuous little creature, only half broken as he was, no sooner felt a new hand on the bit than he commenced some of his playful antics, which ended in fright at the flapping of his rider's cloak, and away he went at full speed across country towards the hills on the left. The Turk stuck to him manfully, as the wild little brute tore madly over the inequalities of the ground, till presently he plunged into a snow drift, and shot his rider a complete somersault over his head. The dark bundle of clothes lay still for a few minutes, and then a head and pair of arms appeared held up to heaven, and, doubtless, there were many *Ya Allahs!* repeated, for I was too far off to hear.

My pony meanwhile went off down the valley, kicked off his saddle in one place and his bridle in another, and then herded, as was his wont, amongst the baggage horses of a Yarkand caravan, which we shortly after found halted at the Coramlik-jilga camp ground, about a mile and a half lower down, and just beyond the snow, where he was captured.

At this place I found the envoy, and Haji Tora, and Captain Chapman, and half a dozen others of our party, all safe, and refreshed by some tea the Yarkandis had set before them. We stopped a few minutes here to look up at the formidable pass behind us. Nothing was to be seen but clouds and snow, and the dark shadows of nightfall which were closing rapidly upon us. We resumed our route, and hurried on, down a rapidly falling

defile, by a winding path amongst a maze of earthy mounds to Gachaka, seven or eight miles distant.

The path was very slippery owing to the hard frost; and the last part of the road was got over in the dark. It was eight o'clock before we reached Gachaka, and here we found that no part of our camp had yet arrived. Haji Tora gave us some dinner in a Kirghiz *acoe* set up for him, and whilst we were thus agreeably engaged had another set up for us. It was the only one procurable in the place, and, though in a very wofully decayed condition, was a welcome shelter for the night. Meanwhile some of our followers came dropping in by ones and twos, but except the envoy's tent none of our camp came in that night.

But I have delayed long enough over our passage of the Sanju Dawan, which we had heard of from our friends under the name of the "Grim Pass." The name is not known to the natives; but whatever its derivation, our experience proved it an appropriate one.

We halted next day at Gachaka for our followers benighted on the pass to come on and join us. This is a mere camp ground on the Sarighyar river, and its elevation is about 10,100 feet. There are some Kirghiz camps in the hollows and nooks around, and some small patches of corn field here, but there is no house or hut of any kind.

During the morning, parties of Kirghiz, with all their available cattle, were sent up to the pass to help on our stranded people, and baggage; and by ten at night all our followers were collected in camp with all our mules, excepting eight that had died on the pass. The riding ponies of our followers did not all join us till the next day, and on arrival at Tam, showed by their nibbled tails, and munched clothing the strait they had been

reduced to by hunger. Haji Tora lost twelve horses of his camp left dead on the pass, and three of our followers were severely frost-bitten. Of these, two lost some of their toes, and did not recover the use of their feet for three or four months; and others were more or less deranged by the night's exposure in the snow. Had it not been for the careful preparations made by the envoy at Ladakh, which provided each man with a suitable kit of warm clothing and furs, I doubt not but we should have lost some of our men. As it was, they recovered from the hard trial better than was expected. At this place the Bhot coolies we had brought on from Shahidulla were discharged, at their own entreaty, which was pressed with a free shedding of tears, to return home before winter fully set in. Poor fellows, they had our best wishes, and certainly earned them.

In the evening Haji Tora took leave of the envoy for the night, as he was expected at Tam, ten miles on down the valley, on a delicate affair in which, according to the custom of the country, a Kirghiz maiden was his partner. We met him there next day, and before leaving Tam, which is a lonely hamlet of six or eight cabins crowded together under two roofs, on our forward journey were joined by the remnant of our followers, and baggage, and cattle from this side of the pass; all brought in by the Kirghiz.

Tam means "a wall" and a "mud house," and exactly describes this place, which is the first fixed habitation (not an outpost) with cultivated fields, that we have come to since we left Changlung. It stands on a sandy beach close to the Sarighyar river, or the "Yellow Ravine" from the predominant colour of its rocks; just as Kokyar, or the "Blue Ravine," further to the west is named from the dark shades of its rocks.

From Tam we marched to Kiwaz, sixteen miles. The road goes down the narrow and winding defile, and crosses its stream repeatedly from side to side, amidst a gradually thickening growth of brushwood. On our way we passed three or four caravans of *charras* from Yarkand on their way up to the pass. Between Gachaka and this place the river is crossed twenty-eight times. In the summer the floods render the route impracticable during certain months, and then the Kulik and Kilian passes are used. A little way out of camp we passed the remains of a barricade built across the valley by Ababakar, when he fled into the mountains from Sa'íd, as I have before mentioned. And at an hour out of camp we came to the Chuchu gully on the right. There is, we were told, an alternative route over the pass at its top to Sanju.

At Kewaz the valley expands into a flat sandy basin, in which are several detached huts and a good deal of cultivation, but I saw no "cotton," which the name of the place implies. The brushwood along the river banks is very similar to that of the Nubra valley.

On arrival in camp the envoy was received by Mulla Hydar, the Hakim Beg of Guma. He brought with him some pheasants which had been hawked near his capital. He was a kind-featured old man with a very quiet, and unassuming manner. He attracted our attention by the size of his Tartar cap, and its fox fur border, the first notably distinct sign of the new costumes, and peoples we were come amongst.

Next day we marched to Sanju, twelve miles, and joined the advance party under Colonel Gordon. A little way out of camp we crossed the Sarighyar river over a wide boulder bed, and going down an expanding valley, along the foot of some high banks of red sand

and gravel, at an hour and a half came to the cultivation of Sanju. We passed on amongst its fields and gardens for another hour and a half nearly, and then arrived in camp, near which the familiar uniforms of our comrades, coming to welcome their chief, caught our attention amongst the trees, and for the time diverted our thoughts from the extraordinary, and sudden change of scene we had entered to the more engrossing topics of each other's welfare and experiences. We found that our friends had got over the pass before the frost set in, and without the accompaniment of a snowstorm, and that they fortunately escaped the difficulties we had to encounter.

We halted here three days to allow the stragglers of our own and Haji Tora's party to come up with the baggage, &c., which had been left behind on the other side of the pass. And a more welcome rest in a more agreeable spot we could not have found in all this region. The halt afforded us an opportunity of experiencing something of the same sort of surprise in the change of scene as the Emperor Babur more than three hundred years before experienced in his much more sudden transition from the north side of the Hindu Kush to its south at Kabul, as is so interestingly told in his memoirs. As he found there, so we found here, a complete change in the character of the scene. The climate, and the country, and its soil were different; its people, and their language, and their manners were of another sort; and its plants, and animals, and birds were of other kinds.

CHAPTER VII.

Sanju is a delightful place. To us emerging from the mountains after three weeks of toil across their vast wastes of desert plateaux, glacier passes, and bridgeless torrents, it seemed a perfect paradise, inviting a season of repose on the very threshold of the level plains of Tatary, which now spread open their wide surface to our view. After the rugged rocks, and crumbling barriers of the gloomy defiles we had left behind us, the eye here revelled in the freedom of its range. The blank nudity and sterility of the soil, which by very repetition had palled upon us, was here relieved by the sight of orchards and plantations, of stubble fields and stacked corn. The recollection of keen frosts and blighting winds was lost in the grateful sensations of a milder climate and free respiration; and above all, the dreadful solitude of the desert was exchanged for the welcome society of mankind—an agreeable change. And the more so by reason of our hospitable reception, no less than of the different race of that fellow-being, which in its foreign type and tongue, as in its strange dress and customs, now invited our interest.

Shortly after arrival in camp, Ali Murad, the Beg or "governor" of Sanju, appeared at the envoy's tent with a long array of men bearing the trays of a sumptuous *dasturkhwan.* There were soups, and pillaos (here called *ash*), and roasts and ragouts. There were dry fruits and fresh fruits, and there were bread in different forms, and sweets of different sorts—all savouring more

of European tastes than Asiatic, as they are seen south of the passes at all events. Spices are almost unrepresented, and grease pervades every thing in the dishes with which they are elsewhere generally used; whilst the fruits are those of Europe, of which again the tea, and its service remind one. Of the sweets, the characteristic were a marmalade of fine cut carrots in syrup (called *murabba*), and a cream of pounded white sugar flipped in the white of eggs (called *nashalla*). Amongst the apples we found a kind called *muzalma*, or "ice apple," which, when cut, was semitransparent as if iced. With every desire to acknowledge the compliment, and do justice to the hospitality provided, our combined exertions were of no avail in making any impression on the piles of eatables which, according to the customs of the country, should disappear under our attention. After tasting of one and another, and praising each in turn, the *allahu akbar* of eating released us from further responsibility, and the feast was passed on to our attendants, who, with a wonderful alacrity, adapting themselves to the requirements of the place, finished the duty we had commenced. And that too entirely heedless of their Indian prejudices which, but a few short weeks ago, nay but only yesterday on the passes, compelled them to cast away as unclean the food from their masters' table.

The *dasturkhwan*, which we faced here with, to our hosts, such disappointing inability to cope with the variety and abundance of its dishes, confronted us at every stage, and at every halt; and daily increased in proportions and delicacy till, at Yarkand it reached to a hundred trays, and at Kashghar attained the plenitude of its richness and variety in I don't know how many more. Nothing was done without the *dasturkhwan*, and at last, the novelty wearing off, the very mention of

the name grated disagreeably on the ear. If we went a shopping to the city, we were inveigled to some mansion and feasted. If we made an excursion to some ruin, the spread of trays was sure to be found awaiting our investigation under the shadow of its crumbling walls; or if we visited the mausoleum of some sainted martyr, the same array invited us to desecrate the sacred precincts; and, finally, if we made a ceremonial call upon a magnate of the land, this irrepressible custom formed the most important part of the interview.

Sanju is a populous and flourishing settlement, of about twelve hundred houses or families, on the Sarighyar river where it debouches on the plain. It extends up and down both banks for ten or twelve miles in an unbroken succession of farmsteads. These consist of three or four huts clustered together in the midst of their orchards, fields, and plantations, and are usually enclosed within surrounding walls, but bear no signs of fortification.

Altogether the place bears a look of prosperity and plenty, which our free rambles over its fields did not belie. And it may be taken as the model of all the other rural settlements we saw in the country, so far as regards its general plan and character of cultivation, its people and their surroundings. That is to say, it is planted on a perennial stream, and irrigated by numerous canals drawn from it. Its houses are more or less widely separated from each other by intervening fields and orchards, vineyards and plantations, or patches of meadow land; and they spread away on every side from a central spot, which contains the residence of the governor, and a street of stalls and booths for the weekly market, where the peasantry assemble from all quarters to barter their farm produce, and small industries.

Its cultivation comprises wheat, and maize, and rice,

and barley in varying proportions according to soil. Hemp, for its resin, which is a staple export to India; and flax, for its seed, which is the source of the oil used in the country; cotton, for the material of the people's every-day dress, and also for export. And garden produce, such as is common in Europe, with melons and tobacco. The fruits are the apple and pear, the apricot, plum, and peach. The vine is every where cultivated, but wine is unknown, and spirits are prohibited. The pomegranate, almond, walnut, jujube and elœagnus, are found generally dispersed; and the mulberry, willow, and poplar of two kinds, with here and there the elm, are the timber and fuel trees of the plantations and the water courses.

Silk is produced in some quantity, but of inferior quality, from this up to Yangi Hissar, and is used for a coarse home texture; though some also finds its way to Khocand, to which place too most of the cotton goes.

The cattle are cows of a finer breed than elsewhere in the country; and sheep of the fat-tailed variety, superior in size and wool to the English animal. The horses are the hardy roadster of the short, thickset Tatar stamp; and there are a few mules of inferior powers—owing to the diminutive size of the ass, which in this country does abound.

The people are Turks of a purer racial type than the more mixed populations of the Yarkand and Kashghar settlements; and they are a peaceable and industrious community, devoted to the cultivation of the soil, and the arts of their agricultural life. And they produce within the limits of their own settlements all the means of an independent subsistence in the matters of necessary food and clothing. A result possibly of the isolation of their several settlements, and a liability to severance from communication with their neighbours in times of anarchy and

war. For around the Sanju settlement here, as elsewhere in this remarkable region, is a blank desert of sand.

Their dress in the summer consists of a loose shirt, and trowsers of coarse home-made cotton, and in winter the same, with a long cloak padded and quilted in the form of a loose robe like a dressing gown. Over these is usually worn a long sheepskin coat, with the Tatar fur cap, and boots lined with a casing of felt. Such is the dress of the peasantry, men and women much alike; the main difference being in the finer quality, and varied patterns of that of the latter, to whom also must be granted the articles peculiar to the sex, such as the mantle and veil.

In the towns, of course, a greater diversity is seen, but what I have stated as the dress of the people of Sanju is the same as that of the peasantry generally, and it illustrates how independent they are of foreign sources for the supply of their actual requirements, as distinct from the luxuries which become wants under a settled government and just rule—those great blessings which, amongst their other benefits, protect industry and promote commerce.

Our arrival at Sanju seemed to excite very little curiosity, and, excepting the fifty or sixty men who gathered around our camp from the neighbouring homesteads, there was no crowd of spectators to stare at the foreigner. There was no guard to prevent their doing so, nor anybody to warn them off had they come. It was not like travelling in Afghanistan, where the European is surrounded by military guards to protect him from the violence or insult of a fanatic people who habitually carry arms, and mob the foreigner as if he were a wild beast to be hooted out of their presence, or hunted to death for intruding amongst enemies, or, at least, fair game to be plundered. Here the people were unarmed, and we moved about their lands with perfect freedom,

and unattended, exciting no more commotion than any one of themselves. Even the little boys did not display the proverbial curiosity attributed to their class generally, and our steps were dogged by no frolicsome urchins making fun of the stranger, as they assuredly would have been had we made our appearance in the streets of any town at home in the guise of our travelling costume here.

Wherever we went, we met a deferential civility, and an unexpected timidity. I passed several home-steads of which the men were at work in the fields, and the women in the courts in front of their houses, and did not observe a single one of them cease their occupations, or rise to stare at me as I passed. I even stood to watch their operations without so much as disturbing them. They seemed afraid to look up, or show any sign of notice or interest. I was shooting little birds in the hedge-rows, and collecting specimens of such plants as were not already withered, and went freely in and out of the orchards, and met no mark of disapproval, except from the savage dogs, and they were immediately hushed by their owners. And such was my experience everywhere except in the cities.

The Beg of this place, Ali Murad, came to consult me about a deep fissure he had in his under lip, and I complimented him on the thriving condition, and quiet demeanour of his people.

"Yes," he said, "Badaulat has reduced them to proper order. But they are a rascally set of ruffians, and always quarrelling among themselves. I keep them straight by the *shara*" (Muhammadan law).

Perhaps he did, though I rather think he tried to magnify the importance of his office and his own special abilities, for he was a pretentious individual, and had none of the retiring modesty of his subordinates.

"Do you know Shaw Sahib?" he inquired abruptly.

"Yes. I saw him at Leh, on my way here," I replied.

"Is it true, then, that he is *Mir* (governor) of Ladakh?"

"No. He is not what you understand by that term (he himself being Mir of Sanju). He is what we call Joint-Commissioner, or Magistrate, to protect the interests of traders passing that way."

"Then he is a servant of the Government," he said, inquisitively.

"Yes. He is appointed by Government to that special duty."

"But he told us, when he came here a few years ago, that he was a simple *Saudágar* (merchant), and had nothing to do with Government."

"Quite true. He was not then employed by Government."

"And he is now," he said, with an enquiring look of doubtful thoughts.

"Yes; because he knew your people, and was your friend, and the best man for the duty."

"I see. I see. He is our friend," and with a pensive nodding of the head and downcast eyes, "he is a very clever man." And saying so, he as abruptly took his leave, and went away chuckling to himself.

I had cauterized his lip, and given him some ointment for it, and, on the strength of the favour, he waylaid me at every turn during the four or five days he was with us, to tell me he felt no better. In fact, he thought the condition of his lip was worse than before I touched it.

"You tell me you have had this disease five years," I said, "and you expect to be cured in five minutes."

"If you only gave me your full attention, I am sure

you could cure me, for you people can do all sorts of things."

"Well, you try my medicine for five weeks, and if it in that time does not cure you, come to me at Yarkand and I will cut the diseased part out for you."

This was quite enough for my garrulous friend, and he pestered me no more to look and see what progress the sore in his lip was making.

Amongst others who sought my assistance here was a trader from the Punjab. He had come up last year, and had penetrated to Khocand, and was now thus far on his way back to Lahore. He had lost the tops of the fingers of both hands from frost-bite. On one, the wounds had long been healed up, but on the other, which he kept in a bag of sheep-skin, smeared inside with suet, they were still open, owing to some decayed bones being in course of extrusion. He said he had cleared a profit of nearly thirty per cent., and seemed quite content to earn it at such a sacrifice.

On the 1st November, Ibraham Khan, who had been left behind on the other side of the pass with the baggage delayed there, arrived in camp with the last of our belongings. He reported that the Kirghiz had rendered a willing assistance, or he would not have got over so soon. The Envoy's handsome present to them at Gachaka, in acknowledgment of their good service to our party on the 26th October, had evidently borne its fruit, and enlisted their goodwill in our favour, notwithstanding the competition of the caravans waiting to pass over. The merchants of some of these, seeing the difficulty ahead, sold their loads at the foot of the pass to their more venturesome fellows, and returned to proceed back to their homes with our camp.

Next morning, just as we were about to mount to

proceed on our onward journey, Mulla Artoc, whom I have mentioned before as having overtaken us in the Nubra valley, arrived from Kashghar with despatches for Haji Tora, and a letter of welcome from Atalik Ghazi for the Envoy. It was handed to the addressee by Haji Tora with the observance of the customary ceremony, and the Envoy, well acquainted with the customs of the country, received it with proper respect in both hands, and facing to the direction whence it came, pressed it to his heart and eyes before unfolding to read its contents; and this done refolded and placed it on his head with a careful tuck into a twist of his shawl turban. Unlike the richly illuminated sheets, and huge double envelopes of brocade and muslin which carry the correspondence of princes on the other side of the passes, this was a mere sheet of plain white paper, folded up in a covering of the same. Unlike too the rhodomontade and absurd compliments used in Indian correspondence, the style of this letter was as simple as its paper, both practical and to the purpose as a missive of welcome and friendship—apparently in pursuance of the fashion first introduced amongst the Mughols by the founder of their power, the great Changiz.

From Sanju we marched to Coshtac—twenty-five miles. After crossing the river on a firm boulder bed, and passing through the strip of cultivation on its other side, we ascended a high sand bank, and at once rose on to the desert. It spread away before us in a great arc which cut the horizon, and presented an undulating surface of gravel, traversed in a south-easterly direction by broken lines of sand dunes. Vegetation was extremely scanty and withered, and animal life was only represented by a few *larks* of the "*black-horned*" species, whilst the tracks of the antelope, with here and there

the burrows of the jerboa, told of other denizens of the desert.

At half-way we dropped into a wide and shallow ravine, and alighted at a resting stage under its bank, for the *dasturkhwan* which we found spread at the side of a frozen tank, under the branches of some poplar trees that grew around it. This place is called Laugar, and consists of three or four huts in the midst of a cluster of willow and elœagnus trees; and round about them are small patches of ploughed land.

We resumed our route across a continuation of the desert to Coshtac, which is a similar, though much smaller, settlement to that of Sanju. It lies in a wide hollow on the banks of the Kilian river, which joins that of Sanju near Guma away to the south-east. The joint streams are further on lost in the desert of Takla, which is a wide spread of sand in whose loose heaps are buried the ancient cities of Khutan. Next day we went across a similar strip of desert to Octoghrac—the "poplar house" from the number of those trees here—twenty miles. This is a small collection of homesteads in the ravine of a perennial little stream, whose spring-head is at the foot of some gravel cliffs away to the left, or west of our route.

Borya—twelve miles—was our next stage, on the 4th of November, across a similar waste to a similar hollow, and similar collection of farms. Except a small caravan, at a few miles out of Sanju, we met no people on the road, and observed nothing to note on the desert, beyond its limitation on the west by low spurs of gravel and clay—which were concealed above in the obscurity of thick haze—and its unlimited stretch on the east to a distant horizon of a like haze, barely distinguishable from the ground with which its colour mingled. Both

sky and land were so much of the same colour—a light yellowish dun or drab—that it was impossible at a distance to distinguish one from the other In the evening we enjoyed a reprieve from the blank monotony of the view above and below and around by the spectacle of a total eclipse of the moon, which we watched to perfection in a cloudless sky, till near an hour short of midnight by our time.

We did not observe that the people of the homesteads amongst which we were camped took any notice of this celestial phenomenon; or if they did, it was without demonstration of any kind. Not a soul was seen, nor a voice heard beyond our own party, except the howl of the watchdogs.

Indeed, the silence that pervaded these isolated little centres of habitation had before attracted our attention, and in all our subsequent experience was one of the most notable features of peasant life in this country. We never heard the sound of music, the voice of song, or the laugh of joy, which, in the country dwellings of any other clime, are the evening's solace after the labours of the day. Nor did we see anything of the social gatherings for gossip or romp, such as one might expect to find in such communities, even amongst the young folks. Yet we were assured that these people have their reunions and parties, and after their own fashion enjoy the pleasures and vanities of life much as other people do. It may be, and very probably is so, only we saw no sign of it, owing possibly to the circumstances of their situation—cut off from their neighbours by desert, and isolated amongst themselves by their separate dwellings; or, perhaps, owing to the rigid discipline of a new form of government, jealous of the assemblage together of individuals of its conquered subjects.

From Borya we marched to Kargalik—twenty-two miles—and halted a day. For the first fifteen miles the route lay across a gravelly desert waste, and then sloped gently to a wide hollow running west and east, and covered for several miles up and down its course with the cultivation of Besh Aric. This is a prosperous and populous settlement, spread, as the name indicates, over five canals drawn off from the river Teznaf (*teznáfi'*, "quickly profitable"), or Tezab (the swift river) as it is called in the "Tarikhi Rashidi." It irrigates all this tract as far as Lakhof on the east, beyond which is the desert again.

We alighted at some tents, pitched for us in the centre of the settlement, to face the usual *dasturkhwan*, and then resuming the route across a small strip of sandy waste, on which we found the wild rue or *peganum*, the wild liquorice, camel's-thorn, and tamarisk, &c., in one hour reached Kargalik, where we were accommodated in a rest house built expressly for us. This was the first house we had occupied since leaving Murree, and, in point of comfort, it was not inferior to those of our more civilised country left behind, though of different style.

In its newly completed state it looked clean and inviting, and its interior furniture showed how thoughtful our hosts had been of our accustomed requirements. The plan of the building was altogether native, and built like the other houses in this country, of raw bricks laid on a foundation of rolled stones from the river's bed, and coated with mud plaster. It was a quadrangular enclosure in the midst of the town, and was entered by a large gateway in which our guard took post. The opposite wall was occupied by an open verandah, raised two or three feet from the ground, which communicated through a doorway, with a smaller court, partitioned off for the kitchen, store-room, and out-offices.

Of the two remaining sides, one was occupied by a large chamber open towards the square, and flanked on each side by a bed-room, which opened into it by a door on one side, and into the square by a door on the other. The remaining side was occupied by a row of six or seven small bed-rooms, protected in front by a verandah. Each room had a fireplace and chimney after the fashion of our own country, and was provided with a folding door of coarse planks which turned on a pivot. The floors were spread with handsome Khutan carpets, and the walls were covered to a height of three feet by a stretch of cotton cloth or velvet plush to protect the dresses of those leaning against it. Above this was a row of recesses by way of shelves, and above the door was a ventilator to light up the white gypsum plaster of the room.

Such were the rooms. The furniture comprised some chairs and bedsteads built expressly for our benefit, on what was supposed to be the model of those of our own country. The production was not bad, and did credit to the Chinese carpenter's ingenuity, thrown, as he was, on his own resources, and without a pattern, in a country where the people sit and sleep only on the floor.

Besides these quarters for ourselves, there was a second quadrangle, across the road, for our servants and cattle, with covered stalls for several scores of horses. This shelter and rest was very acceptable, for our mules seemed to feel the change of climate very much, notwithstanding the care taken of them, and their light work. They did not stand the weather so well as the horses of our guides' escort. These had been warmly clad, and led over the passes from Nubra to Sanju, where their troopers, discarding the hardy little brutes that did the rough work of the mountains, returned to their chargers, and appeared in the proper form and efficiency of a

"Guide." These cavalry horses very quickly picked up condition, and their grand size and proud action amongst the short and clumsy cattle of the country were the admiration of the people, and with their riders inspired no small respect for the worthy representatives of our Indian army. In fact, the two orderlies riding ahead of our cavalcade on the line of march habitually monopolised the salutations of the spectators, who hardly ceased gazing after their handsome uniforms and soldierly appearance till we had passed by unnoticed.

The mules, on the contrary, did not pick up so well till they had enjoyed a good rest and feed in quarters, and it was found necessary to assist them on the march with the cattle of the country. The caravans going out to Leh had already taken up most of the horses on the line of our route, and our hosts could get us only bullocks for the march from Sanju to this. These animals are used in the passage of the mountains apparently in considerable numbers, for I noticed their skeletons were freely scattered on the passes. For caravan work in this region, I believe the Tibat pony is the best of any of the cattle we saw, and the Kashghar roadster the next. Indian cattle are not up to the work.

Kargalik is the largest settlement we have yet seen, and is a market-town. It produces a good deal of cotton of good quality; and much of it goes to the Khocand market in the form of a coarse cloth called *kham*. The people here, of whom we saw a crowd of about three hundred, have a very mixed cast of features, representing the Turk, Tatar, and Chinese separately, and combined in no very attractive forms, in which there seems to be a struggle between beard and no beard.

I measured the height, and circumference of the head

above the ears, of thirty of the men loitering about our gateway. The tallest was $70\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the circumference of his head was 21 inches. The shortest was $61\frac{5}{8}$ inches, and the circumference of his head $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The mean of both measurements for all was $66\frac{7}{8}$ and $21\frac{3}{4}$ inches respectively. The greatest circumference of head was $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the least $20\frac{3}{4}$ inches. All the men wore boots and nearly all had the head shaved.

From Kargalik we marched to Posgam, twenty-five miles, and camped in some gardens near the market. The route lies through a populous and highly cultivated tract, and interspersed here and there are strips of reed marsh, and tamarisk jangal, and wastes covered with saline encrustations and saltworts. At about half-way we forded the river Teznaf, and on a roadside canal beyond it saw an ingenious contrivance for husking rice by water power. It was an overshot watermill, the shaft of which worked a lever by means of two clappers fixed near to its extremity. The long end of the lever had a crusher fixed to it at an acute angle, and it rose and fell with each stroke of the clappers. The whole machine is roughly made of wood, and is inexpensive as it is simple. It might with advantage be adopted in Kashmir.

A little further on we entered Yakshamba Bazar or "Sunday Market," and alighted at a newly built rest-house for the *dasturkhwan*. Of twenty men who bore its trays nine were afflicted with goitre, and of eleven others standing outside the gate five were similarly afflicted. We had seen instances of this disease all along the route from Sanju, but to-day its prevalence seemed general, and further on at Yarkand itself we found fully three-fourths of the population so afflicted, and often to a hideous extent. At this place the Turkish officers in the suite of Haji Tora made their appearance in full

uniform to the admiration of the natives, and created somewhat of a puzzle on the score of their identity, and various were the surmises as to who they really were. Though they wore the red fez, with its tassel of black silk, as the badge of their nationality, still their dress, equipment, and bearing were so thoroughly European, that their co-religionists might well be excused for failing to recognise their long separated brethren without formal introduction; particularly as the western form of their mother speech was hardly more intelligible to the people in its early home, than the strange jargon in which we offered them their own language.

Resuming our route, we crossed some strips of waste and marsh to Posgam, and in an hour and a half reached camp near its Charshamba Bazar or "Wednesday Market." Next day, the 8th of November, we made our entry into Yarkand, and came to a halt for three weeks. Our route for twelve miles lay through the suburbs of the city, which in character resemble the rural settlements already described, and, at about three miles out, crossed the Yarkand river by a wide and shallow ford over a firm pebbly bed. The stream is here called Zarafshan or "the gold scatterer," not on account of any of that precious metal borne in its floods, but on account of the wealth its waters diffuse in the irrigation of this spot. The city itself, and all its southern suburbs, derive their water from this stream through an intricate network of little canals, which here overspreads the land, and fills it with a life and fertility, which appear the more abundant and prosperous by contrast with the silent wastes of sand and marsh that hem the tract around. We found the river about stirrup deep, and flowing in two main channels upon a wide pebbly bed, which spread nearly a mile across between low banks of sand. Later in the season

the waters diminish, so that it is possible to cross dry-shod, stepping from stone to stone. But in the height of summer the floods from the melting snows and glaciers at its sources fill the whole of its channel, and the river is then crossed by boats, of which there are two or three kept for the purpose at the Aygachi ferry, a few miles below the place of our crossing.

We alighted at some tents pitched on the roadside near the Langar Zilchak, a few miles short of the city, for that tiresome ceremony the *dasturkhwan*, and availed ourselves of the opportunity to put off our travelling cloaks and wraps, and display the uniform we had before starting donned for the occasion. Whilst resting here, Yasawul-bashi Nyamatulla, "chief wand-bearer" in the court of the Dadkhwah, arrived on the part of his master to meet and welcome the Envoy. He carried in his hand the emblem of his office—a long white willow wand, which seemed never to leave it, for there it always appeared on the several subsequent occasions on which we saw him—and was attended by a guard of about twenty soldiers, all, like himself, dressed and armed in the Andijan fashion.

He was introduced to the Envoy by Haji Tora, and after the interchange of the usual salutations, and the delivery of his messages, he brought forward his guard to pay their respects. They were standing in a row on one side of the space in front of our tent, and were now marshalled forward in batches of five or six to where the Envoy and his staff stood for the purpose of saluting. This they did by falling on one knee, and making a rapid sweep of both arms in front, whilst they gabbled some words of greeting, the import of which we did not understand; then stroking their beards as they rose, they stepped back to their places to be followed by the next

batch who performed the same ceremony. And so on with the rest. The whole process did not occupy a couple of minutes. The men were fine looking fellows, of quite a different stamp to the people of the country, and in the loose folds of their many robes appeared of huge size.

They wore long riding boots, which were case-lined with felt, and only partly concealed by the capacious trousers. These were of ample dimensions, and were worn, two or three or more at a time, one inside the other; and all were covered by a succession of long robes like dressing gowns, worn one over the other, to the number of four, five, or six. These last were of printed cotton, or of Khocand silk, and of all sorts of lively colours in large staring patterns, which appeared at a distance like what one might imagine to be broad lightning streaks, and great thunder blotches jumbled up together. The sleeves were of very extra length, loose above and tight below, so that they puffed out the arms above the wrist with a gradually increasing thickness. Around the waist the folds of a long scarf contracted the length of garments into a huge bundle above, and much the same below, when seated especially. On it was clasped a leather belt to which hung the sword, and a multitude of receptacles for the furniture of the long prong-rest gun (it was carried slung on one shoulder, and secured under the arm of the same side), together with the other items of the soldier's requisites. There were wash-leather bags for powder and ball, dressed leather cases for caps, for hammer, for pricker, for knife, &c.; there were the flint and steel case, and the little bag for snuff or tobacco, or what not. And above all, the crowning piece of the whole, was the snow white turban—proud badge of devotion to Islam.

This ceremony over, we mounted and set out for the city. The Yasáwul-bashi and his guard, mounted on the sturdy little horses of the country, headed the procession. Next followed the troopers of our Guides' escort, and then the Envoy and Haji Tora, attended by their respective officers riding together, and behind came our mounted followers. At about a mile or so from the city we were met by the principal merchants, and some citizens. They were reined up at the roadside, and, after salutation, joined our party, and swelled the procession to about two hundred and fifty horsemen. None of them were richly dressed or well mounted, nor did any of them carry arms, except the few Government officials mixed up amongst them. Their general appearance was shabby, and set off our own *grande tenue* to the greater advantage.

Near the city we found the road had been hastily cleaned for us—puddles filled, and dung-heaps levelled—and was lined on either side by a crowd of the citizens, who, as we rode past, remained perfectly still, and gazed at us with respectful silence. They made no demonstration of surprise or curiosity, nor was a sound heard amongst them. They were comfortably clad in the sheepskins, and padded cotton gowns of the country, and wore the long boot, and the Tatar cap of lambskin, edged with otter fur; and if one might judge from their ugly faces, and inexpressive looks, appeared well disposed towards us.

I never saw a more quietly-conducted crowd, nor a more submissive-looking people than those we passed through as we entered the city of Yarkand. Nor, at the same time, have I ever seen such a collection of repulsive features and sickly countenances. It is beyond my power to convey a correct idea of the confusion of

physiognomies presented by this crowd of faces, though there was a master type running through the whole of its diversity of forms. The gaunt, almost beardless visage, and thick complexion of the Manchu, with his sunken eyes, high cheek bones, and projecting jowl, form the extreme of harshness in one direction; whilst the fleshy, perfectly smooth face, and pinky yellow colour of the Calmac, with his oblique eyes, flat cheeks, and rounded jowl, form the extreme of plainness on the other.

Between the two, as family types, are the bearded, sallow-skinned Turk of the country, and the angular, rosy faced Kirghiz of the Steppes; the coarse-featured, hard-lined Tungani, and the thick-lipped, square-faced Khitay, both of Western China; and a number of manifest Mongolic forms, in which the distinctive features of the others are indefinitely blended by intermixture one with the other; or else lost in the improvement introduced by foreign admixture, the nature and fruits of which are seen in the crowd before us. For, attractive by their singularity are the tall form, and handsome face of the Caucasian, here sparsely represented in the pure type of the fair-skinned Kashmiri, and his more swarthy kinsman the Badakhshi, or in the transmission uninjured of their special characteristics to the "Arghun" of their alliance with the women of the land. Equally notable, too, are the robust frames, and intelligent looks of the now dominant people of the country—of the Uzbak Tatar of Andijan, or of the "Chalgurt," the fruit of his former intercourse here—in whom the superior combination of race types, derived from intermixture with the Tájik, has lost nothing of its development by the recurrence to its original Turk stock.

Such are the main family distinctions amongst the

crowd of faces we here saw, taking the best as models, for fully one-half of them were disfigured to a greater or less extent by goitre, and a general sickly expression of countenance, which last I afterwards found was due more to the abuse of opium and *bang* than to the natural sallow skin of the race.

We entered the city by the Altun Dabza, or "Gold Gate," on its south side, and passing through a succession of streets to the left, here and there occupied by rows of shops and private dwellings alternately, passed out through the Cawughat Dabza, or "Melon Gate," on the west side, into the *tsinhai*, or "public market," of the Chinese time. It was a sort of military bazar, extending between the city and their fort, or *mangshin*, the present Yangishahar, four hundred yards or so off to the west, and was, as described to us, full of life and business in the days of its prosperity. Its main street always presented a gay scene, with the painted flags, and shop signs of the Chinese merchants, who here sold and bought and went away, whilst the restaurants, and booths of the permanent settlers were always crowded by visitors, and pleasure seekers from the city and fort.

The scene of this former bustle and activity is now represented by some miserably decayed little suttlers' huts near the gateway. Beyond them, on the right, are a dismantled hall of justice, and a preserved mosque, both prominent objects from their size; and in rear of them is an open space used as a cattle-market, and place of execution—the gallows, with gibbets for three, occupying a prominent eminence at its higher end—whilst in front they look across the road on to some broken walls and heaps of ruins. Further on the space

has been cleared, and enclosed on the right as a sarae for the fort, but is left on the other side an open waste on which rubbish is shot.

We found no guards at either of the city gates we passed through, except two or three men seated on the ground, with their guns placed beside them. On entering the fort, over the drawbridge of its ditch, however, we passed a guard-house, between the outer and inner gates, in the verandah of which were seated some thirty men, similarly equipped to those before described. No two were alike in the showy patterns of their robes, but all wore white turbans, and sat on their heels crossed under them as motionless and silent as statues, with their great prong-rest guns set before them in a row, muzzle outwards, and with their swords lying across their laps. Their hands were folded together in front, and concealed by the overlapping of the sleeves, whose extra length served the purpose of gloves. And as we rode by some raised their eyes to look at us, but most kept them steadily fixed on the ground before them, with a respectful inclination of the head. On passing through the inner gate, we had on our right a shed of gun-carriages, and old pieces of cannon, a relic of the Chinese rule. About the shed were about thirty artillerymen, all dressed in an uniform of Turkey-red cloth—trousers, coat, and cap all of the same material, but of inferior quality, and bad fit. They were seated about the place in any fashion, and took no notice of us as we passed, beyond surveying us with upturned faces of surprise.

A short way farther on, between the walls of soldiers' quarters on either side, and we alighted at the court of the Residency which had been prepared for us. It was the same that Mr Forsyth and his party occupied on the occasion of their visit to this place in 1870, but had

recently been enlarged by the addition of some new rooms for our larger numbers, and was now comfortably furnished with carpets, &c., in much the same fashion as the quarters at Kargalik.

Immediately on arrival, though an hour had hardly elapsed since we had done our duty by one at Zilchak, a *dasturkhwan* of ninety-two trays of fruits and sweets was borne in by as many soldiers, who nearly filled the court, whilst, I don't know how many, dishes of cooked food were spread on the verandah in front of the Envoy's quarters. At the same time, one of the chief men attached to the Dadkhwah's court, called on the Envoy on the part of his master for the *áchmáng hármáng* ("May you not be hungry or fatigued"), or ceremonial inquiry after health, &c., and it was arranged through him that the Envoy should call on the Dadkhwah on the morrow.

Meantime, as we were to stay here for the present, we settled down in our quarters, and explored their limits; an investigation which gave us every reason for satisfaction with the thoughtful arrangements made for our comfort as the guests of the Atalik Ghazi. During our stay here we received every attention from the officials appointed to attend to our wants, and enjoyed perfect freedom to visit the city and suburbs as we pleased.

Next day at two o'clock, the hour appointed, the Yasawul-bashi having come over to conduct him, the Envoy, attended by his staff in undress uniform, paid an official visit to the Dadkhwah, whose residence was in a sort of inner fort or citadel close by. It stood at the end of the street in which was our Residency, and just before it was an artillery guard over some six or eight field-guns. The men were dressed in the red uniform before mentioned, and stood at the attention behind

their guns as we passed. The open space in front of the gateway had for some reason been recently railed in, and a cross-bar had been fixed across its entrance. This last, however, was removed on representation, and we rode through without dismounting till we reached the gateway. The guard stood up as we passed, and Muhammad Ali, the eldest son of the Dadkhwah (and Mahrambashi or "Head Page" in his court), receiving the Envoy in the outer court, conducted him through two others—the guards in each standing—to the audience-hall. Here the Dadkhwah came out to the veranda, and received the Envoy very cordially. We were all introduced in turn, and he then conducted his visitor to a seat on the cushion at the top of the hall, where, taking our seats in a line below them, we were soon at ease on the cushion.

The audience-hall was an airy room, about sixty or seventy feet long by twenty-five wide, and had four or five windows looking on to the veranda. The ceiling was painted in bright colours, and decorated with Persian couplets. The floor was spread with Khutan carpets, and there was no other furniture in the room. After the presents were brought in by our people the dasturkhwan of tea, and sweets, and bread, and fruits was spread. On every ordinary occasion of a visit this form of refreshment is observed. The cooked foods of our past experience are served only on special occasions as on the march, and are then intended as a dinner. The tea was delicious, and had a peculiar rich aroma, which was quite new to us. It was prepared without milk, and this is undoubtedly the proper form for the beverage. The Dadkhwah told us this tea came through Russian merchants from Almati. It is now very scarce in the country, and sells, if I recollect

rightly, at sixteen or eighteen shillings a pound. Some of the Indian teas had found a market here, but they have hardly had time to gain much favour, owing to their very different flavour from what the people have been habituated to. During our stay at Kashghar, the Envoy presented some mule loads of Himalayan growth which he had brought from India to Atalik Ghazi, but his highness so little approved its quality, that he distributed the whole of it amongst his officers and servants even before we left the shadow of his court. The Dadkhwah received us alone, and the Envoy's orderlies with some of the court officials stood at the door with our camp serjeant. He was in full Highland costume, with the banner and ribbons of his pipes adding to the splendour of his appearance. Our host glanced hastily at him once or twice, but, to our surprise, made no observation. We afterwards learnt that good taste had suppressed the natural curiosity so strange a garb was calculated to excite, for the Dadkhwah felt scandalised at the sight of the bare knees, and reprimanded his *yasawal-bashi* for having so hurried our toilet that one of our attendants should appear in his presence without his trousers.

His extensive reading had not made the Dadkhwah acquainted with the peculiarity of the "Garb of Gaul," and he learned something new by our visit. Muhammad Yúnus, though without the wide experience of Haji Tora, enjoys the reputation of being the most learned scholar amongst the Andijan possessors of the country, and he is certainly the best of their governors. He is a native of Tashkand, where his brothers still resided when we were at Yarkand, and was formerly the scribe of Atalik Ghazi at the time he held the office of *Mir*—a post similar to that of the Beg of Sanju, that is, governor of some petty rural district—under the government of Mallah Khan.

When Atalik Ghazi, at that time *Coshbegi* Yacub Beg, attached himself to the cause of the Capchac leader Alim Culi, he got his secretary appointed to the court of the new Khan as *Shaghawal-bashi*, or "chief comptroller" of the officers charged with the duty of receiving guests and foreigners. On the death of Alim Culi, in action against the Russians at Tashkand, and the restoration of Khudayar Khan to the rule in Khocand, he fled the country with a number of others who, in the revolutions preceding the rise of Alim Culi, had taken the side against both the Russians and Khudayar, and with them joined Atalik Ghazi at Kashghar shortly after he had deposed his master, the Khoja Buzurg Khan, and seized the government for himself.

Here his former master welcomed him back to his service, and, relying on him as his most trusty and wise counsellor, took him into favour, and appointed him to the charge of the recently captured district of Yarkand, which is a territory about the size, though not nearly so populous, as the Peshawar division, as *Dadkhwah* or "Governor of the first class," corresponding to our commissioner of a division in the Panjab. The reputation acquired by him in his former office has followed him here, and he is generally styled Shaghawal Dadkhwah by his compatriots. During its first years his rule was one of very sharp severity, and, if report does not exaggerate, the gallows were always swinging with malefactors, till, in fact, the place was cleared of evil-doers. At all events, the citizens do not now show much sign of the turbulent and litigious character usually assigned to them, though they are still kept under a very strict police surveillance; and under the *régime* in force, the Dadkhwah consequently may be considered a popular governor. To us he is favourably known for the hospitable reception he

gave to our travellers from Inda, and he has done much to cultivate the trade with India by conciliating treatment of our merchants, without in any way abating from the claims of the *Shara'*, or relaxing the severity of the religious disabilities—such as the double rates of impost on Hindus, and other nonmuslims, prohibition of the turban, riding on a saddled horse in the city, &c.

On the conclusion of this visit we called on Haji Tora, who occupied a house immediately opposite our quarters, and in the evening went with him to the city, where a *hammam* had been got ready for our use. Some little evasion was attempted on the part of the Dadkhwah's officials, who did not appear willing that we should enter their bath, but this difficulty was soon overcome by Haji Tora, who sent one of his own servants to set matters straight, and then accompanying our party, himself joined us in enjoying the luxury. We were mainly indebted to the action of our friend in this matter for the subsequent liberty of movement accorded to us during our stay in this country of espionage and police restrictions, the hardships of which Messrs Hayward and Shaw, and the Russian visitors before us, experienced more fully, though only in the lightest form, compared with the lot they would assuredly have met in Kabûl.

Of course, the *hammam* was not completed without the inevitable *dasturkhwan*, and we returned to our quarters well satisfied with the success of the day's operations, though, owing to the misunderstanding above alluded to, the bath had not been heated as well as it should have been to insure its proper enjoyment. It resembled those in the city of Peshawar in every respect, and oddly enough amongst the shampooers attached to it were two Afghans of that place. One of these men claimed my acquaintance, and told me all about my life on that frontier

with a correctness that surprised me. I gathered from his garrulity that he came to Peshawar originally from Kandahar, and that he found his way here two years ago through Kabul and Badakhshan. It is astonishing how these Afghans wander about. They overrun India down to the Deccan as traders, and soldiers. They are found in Turkey and Egypt, and are met at Nijni Novgorod, and in the markets of Tehran and of Bukhara. And of the extent of their wanderings in this country, and perhaps into China, the fact that Atalik Ghazi on arrival at Kashghar was joined by upwards of a hundred of them will convey some idea. These men, amongst others of their countrymen in the army of the ruler of Khutan, were, it appears, scattered amongst the cities of this region as traders at the time of the Tungani rebellion, and on the appearance of the Ghazi cast aside their money speculations for the prizes and plunder of war, which for them, apart from their natural predilections, was an incumbent duty as professors of Islam.

In the zeal of their religious and military ardour they enlisted under the banner of Atalik Ghazi, and were of no small service in conducing to the success of his campaigns; but they have since found themselves netted in a toil they at that time little reckoned on. They all, in the course of their successive victories, took to themselves wives of the land, and for the most part they were captives of war; but on the establishment of the captain of their band as independent sovereign of the territory of his conquests, they found themselves the subjects of a despot king, and not at all the noble warriors for the faith, nor, in virtue of the character, the free rovers over infidel rights, which they fancied themselves to be. On the conclusion of the war many of

these men sought leave to return to their homes, but the ties of their Kashghar families proved cords that bound them to the land more strongly than they can break through. For the new ruler allows no woman to leave the country of his acquisition, so thinned as it has been of its male population by the recent massacres and wars, any more than he allows her husband, or legal protector, to abandon her as a burden upon the others. These Afghan adventurers indeed have but small chance of ever quitting this land of their forcible adoption, for the ruler is as jealous of any man leaving his territory as he is determined no woman shall; whilst the summary execution of captured runaways is enough to deter the most enterprising from attempting to secure their liberty by the evasion of the law.

Haji Tora, amongst other matters, explained this regulation to the Envoy, before we entered the country, as a guide for the conduct of any of our camp-followers who might wish to lose their hearts to the fair ones of the land, in order that they might be prepared to lose their liberty also. "They may marry here if they choose," he said. "There is no prohibition. But if they do so, they must settle here. They cannot go out of the country again with you." Whether the charms of the fair Tatars were wanting in attraction, or whether the rule of Atalik Ghazi was too powerfully deterrent, I will not pretend to decide. It is a fact, however, that of more than a hundred followers, Indian subjects, not one elected to transfer his allegiance, even for such thrifty mates, and such orthodox rule, as are the boast of Kashghar.

Both here, and afterwards at Kashghar, I opened a charitable dispensary in the Residency premises, and saw a good deal of the Afghans, in the service of the Atalik Ghazi, who used to visit it. And from them,

in their own language, which was not understood by those around, I got an insight into the state of affairs in the country which, of course, was not to be looked for from the Andijan officials appointed to attend us, nor from the people of the country, for they were carefully kept away from us, or only permitted an interview in the presence of their guardians.

The police system here, as we soon discovered, is a most intricate network; and worked with a marvellous secrecy which nobody understands, and everybody dreads. As a consequence the people are silent and suspicious. House to house visitation is discouraged in a peremptory manner known to the governors, whilst private entertainments are watched by their agents. The people see a spy in every man they meet, and accost each other with polite commonplaces, and courteous bows and curtsies in place of conversation. They know their words and actions are noted at every turn, and they conduct themselves accordingly. No traveller or merchant can move from one place to another, or quit the country, without a permit. And no subject can go from one town to another without a passport. Nor can he leave the country for trade, pilgrimage, or other business, without giving a security. In fact, the whole system is as perfectly organised as in the more civilised countries of Europe where it still exists, and on much the same model, and speaks much for the administrative talents of the Atalik Ghazi, and his chief counsellor, the Dadkhwah of Yarkand. And we had an experience of its working very soon after our arrival under his protection in an occurrence which revealed to us its mysterious network of agents, and put us on our guard amongst our hosts and friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

During our stay in the Yangishahar or "New Town" of Yarkand we availed ourselves of the facilities afforded to visit the adjoining city, called Kuhna Shahar or "Old Town," and study its peculiarities, and learn what we could of its history. We saw it in the bustle and crowd of its market days, and we walked its streets in the emptiness and inactivity of their ordinary state, and altogether we had fair opportunities of judging of its size and population, its trade and manufactures.

Yarkand is one of the ancient cities of Tatary, and was in remote times a royal residence of the Turk princes of the Afrasyab dynasty. Of the origin of its name I have met with no explanation, but, following the track of Remusat, who traces Khutan to the Sanskrit Kustana, I have ventured to hazard the derivation of the name of this city from the same lingual source, together with those of several others in this territory whose present orthography presents no such distinct derivation from their Sanskrit forms as does the example above mentioned. Their etymology can be traced to no original source in the region where the names appear, and their easy transformation without violence to Sanskrit forms, coupled with the connecting link in the ancient history of the country, seem to warrant their affiliation to the source indicated. In this view Yarkand would be the Tatar form of Hari Khand—"the dwelling of the Hari" —whose name appears in other places in the form of

Herat and Hari, Hari Chand near Peshawar, and Hariana near Delhi. By its citizens the place is pronounced Hyarkan, but is written Yarkand. The city shows no traces of ever having covered much more ground than it occupies at the present time, but appears to have been merely the capital of the little sand-girt state in the midst of which it stands; now and again, in the revolutions of time, rising to pre-eminence for a season as the seat of authority over the other similar little states which constitute its natural geographical territory in the basin of the Tarim river.

Wells Williams in his "Middle Kingdom," on the authority of Chinese chroniclers, if I recollect aright, gives its walls a circuit of seventeen miles. It is incredible that the city could have ever attained such proportions, for the country is incapable of supporting the population of a city of such magnitude, unless indeed its characters were formerly of a very different nature to what they are now. It is more probable that this measurement included the suburbs from which the city derived the means of its support, because the present Yarkand—urban and suburban, as a municipal district separate from the territory over which it exercises immediate jurisdiction—may be limited by such a circumference.

From its position on the line of the ancient caravan route from China to Turkey by way of Caratakin and Badakhshan to Balkh, it formerly enjoyed considerable importance, and was long the rival of Kashghar for pre-eminence as the capital of the country. But the superior situation of the latter on the direct and easier route by Andijan, coupled with its importance as a strategic position, at an early period, secured it the preference—a distinction which it maintained more or less uninter-

ruptedly from the time of the Arab ascendency to that of the Mughal decline. Yarkand meantime held a secondary importance, and now and then, as the anarchy of the times afforded opportunity, rose to a short-lived independence as a separate state, but does not appear to have become the seat of government until Ababakar Mirza made it the capital of his kingdom, the limits of which were Acsu and Khutan on the east, Atbashi and Isigh Kol on the north, Uzkand (now in ruins), Ush and Madi, Jagrak, and the Bolor or Pamir steppes to Wakhan on the west, and the Tibat plateaux up to Caracoram on the south.

Ababakar greatly improved the city with noble mansions and gardens, and strengthened its fortifications by a device which the author of "Tarikhi Rashidi" describes as a novelty in the country. He protected each gate of the city by an outwork thrown forward to the distance of a hundred paces, and its peculiarity consisted in its forming a lane of that length leading from the outside to the gate. That is to say at a hundred paces in front of the gate were built two round towers for archers, and these were connected with the gate by parallel lines of covered way from which the defenders could shower their arrows upon the enemy assaulting the gate.

They proved so efficient against the arms of the period that Yúnus twice failed to take the city, though he besieged it on each occasion with a vastly superior force. Nothing now remains of these defences, though their sites at each gate are marked by parallel rows of booths and huts which extend to about their former length outside each. Of the city in Ababakar's time, the work I have above cited gives the following particulars. The walls, which had been rebuilt by Ababakar, enclosed an area of 200 *man*, *i.e.*, taking the *man* at fourteen pounds,

land requiring 2800 lbs. of corn to sow it, and had six gates protected as above described. One part of the interior was walled off as the *arg* or citadel, in which was the palace, and the rest was divided into twelve parks or gardens, in each of which were the mansions of the wealthy and about a hundred houses. In the excavations and levellings necessary for these improvements, the *cázuc* or "prisoner gang" discovered a well of hidden treasure. Its value in jewels and money was so great that Ababakar organised a systematic exploration of all the ancient ruins in his territory, and realised an immense wealth in precious gems and metals, and notably from those of Khutan. The greater part of these was plundered by the troops of Sa'íd, but the most valuable of his treasures Ababakar carried off in his flight to the mountains, and they were ultimately cast away into the torrents of the Yurangcash, and Caracash rivers. It was this greed for unknown wealth which was the cause of all his cruelties, and the sufferings of his victims in those "treasure-searching gangs," which were named *cázuc*, after their resemblance to the "galley-slave" gangs of Europe. The worst criminals, and the innocent victims of his anger were alike, without distinction of crime or sex, condemned to the *cázuc* to swell the number of his labourers.

The city was supplied with water by canals which Ababakar led into it from the Yarkand river. Its quality is praised as extremely good, and is considered by the people as the best in the world. Its effects in producing the goitre so prevalent here are not alluded to, nor did I come across any passage in the book mentioning this disease. And this, if not an oversight on my part, which I don't think it is, is very remarkable. Because Mirza Hydar is elsewhere so full and correct in his description

of the country generally. Yet the prevalence of this disease at Yarkand is recorded as a special feature of its climate by Marco Polo three hundred years before the time of my author.

Ababakar is said to have laid out twelve thousand gardens in Yarkand, but, as Sogholoc near Kashghar is included amongst the number, the term must apply to the whole territory of his government, and not merely to the limits of his capital. The statement illustrates the prosperity of the country under the dreadful tyranny of his rule as dependent entirely on his own despotic will. Of the power of this I shall have to record a remarkable instance hereafter in the destruction of Kashghar.

On the conquest of the country by Sa'íd, he continued Yarkand as the capital, but his son and successor, Rashid, removed his court to Kashghar, and restored that city to its former rank as the capital of the country. And it remained so till, in the anarchy which followed his death, Yarkand contested the proud position. This period is known as the Khoja usurpation, and the wars of the Carataghluc and Actaghluc, or "Black Mountaineer" and "White Mountaineer" factions respectively.

Shortly after his accession to the throne in 1533 A.D. Rashid allied himself with the Uzbak rulers to the west of the mountains, and received a visit from the celebrated divine of Samarcand Maulana Khoja Kasani ("our reverend lord of Kasan") better known by his title of Makhdumi al Azim ("My greatest Master"). This saintly priest was received with proper reverence, and as a mark of his devotion was granted a large estate in Kashghar. He married a lady of the city, and left two sons at Kashghar, named Khoja Kalan and Khoja Ishac. After the death of their father, which occurred at Samarcand in 1542, these two sons rose to prominence in the affairs of the

government and formed rival factions. The eldest son, whose mother was a native of Samarcand, was supported in his pretensions by the people of Yarkand and the Caratagh to the west; and the younger son, a native of the country, by the people of Kashghar and Actagh to the north.

Their jealousies and contentions threw the country into disorder, and dismembered it amongst the several sons of Rashid, who, becoming independent in their several little states, waged war against each other for the supremacy. In the midst of this anarchy Khoja Hidayatullah, more commonly called Hazrat Afac, who succeeded as chief of the Actaghluc faction, made an attempt to seize Kashghar. He was repulsed and driven out of the country, but ultimately finding his way to Ila, he there sought the aid of the Ghaldan or "ruler" of Zunghar to establish him in the government his family had ruined, and himself had failed to secure.

The Ghaldan marched an army to Kashghar and annexed the country in 1678, and establishing the Khoja as his governor at Yarkand as the capital, posted his Calmac troops and officers in all the cities of the territory. And thus the country remained for nearly a century. The Calmac occupation was a purely military tenure, the administration of the government being left in the hands of Musalman officers chosen by the Khoja in subordination to the Calmac officers appointed from Zunghar. The system, as might have been predicted, led to endless contentions amongst the Khojas (whose numbers seemed to multiply with the years) themselves, and the heirs of the Khans whom they had robbed of their rights, and consequently the rule of the Calmacs was characterised by a series of campaigns to restore order in the country they had seized from its belligerent possessors.

On the conquest of Zunghar about 1760 by the Chinese, they acquired possession of Kashghar as an appanage of the Ghaldan's possessions, and held the country on precisely the same system that their predecessors had done. They retained Yarkand as the capital, and residence of the Khan Amban or "chief governor," subordinate to the Viceroy of Ila, to which Kashghar and Zunghar were now attached as divisions of one provincial government, and they held the country by strong garrisons planted in the cities of the several states composing the territory. They left the internal government in the hands of Musalman officers elected by the people, or appointed by the Viceroy, and themselves merely looked to the protection of the frontiers, and realisation of the revenue by the maintenance of order and encouragement of commerce. Their government through the Musalmans, however, proved no more peaceable or profitable than that of their Calmac coreligionists and predecessors with the like agency, and the proud spirit of Islam, fretting under the dominance of the infidel yoke, took advantage of the tolerance accorded by the pagan to his subjects of whatever creed to raise no less than four serious insurrections in less than as many decades for the overthrow of his hated rule—hated till it was lost, and then welcomed by the rebels as preferable to that for which they had rebelled.

The last of these revolts was under the leadership of a refugee in Khocand—the Khoja Wali Khan, whom I shall have to mention hereafter—and probably, so horrible were his barbarities, would have been the last, even had not the Chinese rule been overthrown by causes operating from another direction. Khutan, Yarkand, and Kashghar, were the states implicated in these revolutions instigated by the Khojas, and they were the only ones that suffered

in the measures enforced for their suppression, measures hardly less barbarous than those that called them forth.

Under the Chinese rule Yarkand appears to have been the most flourishing city in the Kashghar territory, but since the conquest of the country by Atalik Ghazi, and the selection of Kashghar as his capital, it has greatly declined in wealth and importance. And many years must elapse before it can recover its prosperity, unless the intolerance of the present Islam code is very much relaxed in favour of unbelievers in its perfection. Of this happily there are hopeful signs in the policy adopted by the present ruler, and with the British merchant on one side and the Russian on the other, his country may yet, let us hope, become a free mart to the European, and a pattern of enlightened government to his ignorant and exclusive fellow-potentates of Central Asia. With this fervent wish let us leave the doubtful future, and turn to the records of the past.

For Yarkand, claiming our curious sympathy as the seat of a Christian bishopric, and the residence of Marco Polo in the thirteenth century, and as the shelter of Benedict Goes in the seventeenth (as the wondrously attractive pages of "Cathay, and the Way thither" tell us), in recent years, has acquired a fresh interest for us by reason of the Tungani rebellion, and that severance of the country from Chinese rule, which have ended in its conquest by a neighbouring tribe, and substituted the friendly relations of the present possessors for the exclusiveness of their predecessors.

Of the precise causes and exact course of this rebellion, so disastrous in this region to the prestige of Chinese empire, little is satisfactorily known. The movement originated in Salar or Hochow, in the province of Kansuh, at the time that similar hostilities were waged by the

Tayping in the north, and the Panthay in the south of the empire; and like those, it appears, was a religious war for the subversion of Budhist government by that of Islam.

In Kansuh the Musalman Chinese, called Tungani, rose against their Budhist brethren, called Khitay, and massacring them seized the government for themselves, and waged a successful war against the imperial troops. Of these Tungani there were several thousands mixed up with the Khitay in the different garrisons of Zunghar and Kashghar. The successful action of their brethren in the seat of their power immediately inspired them with the like spirit of disaffection, and the flame of their discontent very rapidly spread over all the territory garrisoned by them.

So far as concerns Kashghar the wave of their revolt rolled on from Khamil and Turfan northwards to Orumchi and Manas, and westward along the caravan route to Kucha and Acsu. Everywhere the rebels enacted the same roll of massacre and plunder of the Budhists, and then fell under the domination of Musalman priests of a sect different to their own, and despising them as heretics. Those to the north and east of Carashahr, to Turfan inclusive, passed under the rule, temporary as it was, of Daúd Khalifa, an aged Khoja of Orumchi; and those to the west, including Yarkand, but exclusive of Kashghar and Khutan, passed under the rule of Rashuddin or Rashiduddin Khoja of Acsu, which he made the capital of his transitory kingdom.

So soon as Rashuddin, about the end of 1862, took the control of affairs at Acsu, the Chinese Ambans, or governors, in the cities on the west, finding themselves cut off from communication with their headquarters at Ila, immediately shut themselves up in their forts, and separ-

ated themselves from their Tungani comrades, whom they kept under surveillance; whilst the Khan Amban at Yarkand, as chief governor at the capital, devised means to disarm them. He was too late. The Acsu emissaries had already reached them, and the suspected Tungani, informed of the Amban's scheme to disarm them, forestalled his intention by a night attack upon the fort, and the massacre of 2000 of their former comrades with their families. In the morning they rushed into the city, raised the populace, and before nightfall left the streets full of Khitay corpses, and their shops plundered of their contents. Many escaped to the suburbs, and others, mostly women and children, found shelter in the cellars of benevolent Musalman neighbours. Within a few days the example of Yarkand was followed by Khutan and Kashghar. At the former place, an old priest, named Haji Habibulla, who had lately returned from the pilgrimage to Mecca, took the lead in affairs with his son Abdurrahman Khoja, and, on the latter's death in action against the Acsu troops, assumed independent authority as king, with the title of Haji Habibulla Padshah. At Kashghar the city was defended by the Chinese Musalman governor, who called in the aid of the Kirghiz chief Sadic Beg, but he and his crew proved such villanous ruffians that they were ousted, and then, failing to recover the city, Sadic summoned a Khoja from Khocand, as will appear hereafter. Meanwhile, in Yarkand, the people recovering from the shock of the bloody tumult raised by the Tungani set up their chief priest, Hazrat Abdurrahman, as king, and elected a fellow-citizen, Nyaz Beg, as his prime minister, for the maintenance of order, and the organisation of a force, with the Tungani as the nucleus, to capture the Yangishahr held by the Khitay.

They besieged and assaulted the place for three months with little success, and then some Kucha and Acsu Khojas arriving with a large army they renewed their efforts with redoubled energy. It took them another three months, however, before they reduced the garrison to straits. Finally the Amban, finding their mines had sapped the outer walls, blew himself and family up with the palace, and the soldiers immediately firing the powder magazines, the whole garrison perished in the ruins.

The Acsu Khojas now claimed the victory, and the government of the place as servants of the king Rashuddin. The citizens objected, and finally the government was divided between Abdurrahman in the city, and the Khoja Burhanuddin with the Tungani and Acsu troops in the fort. And so it continued till Atalik Ghazi came to demand the submission of the Khoja to his master Buzurg, as the Khan Khoja, or "lord paramount." His attempt on this occasion to take the place by stratagem failed, and he was forced to retreat with the loss of his camp. His second attempt proved more successful. And Nyaz Beg, for his services in delivering the place to him, was taken into favour, and subsequently appointed Dadkhwah of Khutan, which soon after fell into the possession of Atalik Ghazi by an act of treachery, and butchery to extermination, which is not a solitary blot on the character of his conquest of this territory, as Acsu, and Kucha, and Turfan can tell.

Since the establishment of the new rule, the place has enjoyed peace; and order, whatsoever the character of the means employed, has been established with wonderful security. Under the government of its present Dadkhwah, violent crime is now almost unknown, and trade, seeking markets in new directions since the complete closure of its former channels, is encouraged as an

absolute necessity, if not for the people, for their rulers at least.

The city, like those of Central Asia generally, is built of raw bricks and clay, and wears an untidy look, from the state of disrepair in which its fortifications are left. It lies low on the plain, in the midst of wooded suburbs, and presents no features of attraction to the stranger approaching it. The walls are of an irregular trapezoid shape, with their length from north to south, and are entered by five gates—namely, the Altun Dabza, or "Gold Gate," on the south; the Cawughat or "Melon," on the west; the Terabagh, or "Hide Garden," on the north-west; the Musci, or "Poisoner" (from some former chief having been so disposed of here), on the north-east; and the Khancah, or "Monastery," on the east. They are very massive, and supported at intervals by turreted bastions, whilst along the top runs a parapet of loopholed walls. There is no ditch, and the height of the walls is very much lessened by the debris, which forms a sort of glacis slope to near the top in some parts, so as to render their scaling a matter of no difficulty.

In the interior arrangement of the city the streets and houses are crooked and irregular, as those of Oriental towns generally are, but they possess a peculiarity I have seen nowhere else in Central Asia; that is, they here and there open on to small squares occupied by tanks, on the sides of which grow fine silver poplars, and willows. They are the source of water supply to the citizens, and being open are in no way protected from the filth and dust of the streets. At the same time may be seen a woman washing her soiled linen at one side, and a man filling his *kapak* or "calabash" (a hollowed gourd) at the other; whilst its bottom is black with the decayed

leaves, quantities of which are seen floating on its surface, and the deposit of dust, &c., blown into it by the wind. There are said to be upwards of a hundred of these tanks in the city. Some are fed by constantly-running canals, but most are fresh filled every third or fourth day. But in winter when the canals are frozen, and hence the *raison d'être*, they are unchanged for two or three weeks at a time. There are several wells in the city, but their water is considered very unwholesome, and they are consequently rarely used.

The private dwellings in their exterior have a look of neglected disrepair, and the shops in the bazars and main streets are mean compared with those of an Indian city of the same class, owing possibly to the inferior materials of their architecture. In its general aspect the interior of Yarkand may be likened to that of Kandahar though it has neither the regular form of the fortifications of that city, nor any bazar like its Charsu. But like it, this city is built of clay, is situated on a plain, is watered by canals, and is surrounded by garden suburbs. In these respects it resembles Mashhad too, though it is not to be compared with that city in point of size, elegance, wealth, or population.

By population I mean numbers only; for in outward appearance there is not so great a difference between the people of Yarkand and those of Mashhad as there is between them and those of Kandahar. In the last-named city, the Tatar cap and boot, as much as the Tatar physiognomy, are not known amongst the handsome Aryan features and elegant turbans of the people thronging its bazar. But in the other, both the physiognomy and the dress mingle in the mixed crowd of its shady Khiyaban, or are found in distinct groups in its spacious caravanserais.

And here the similitude ends; for in manners and domestic life, as in language and religious belief, the divergence is greater, though not without a social or family link of connection common to the two. The asperity of the Tatar face, which at Mushhad is seen softened down almost to a European stamp of complexion and features, is here found in its varied forms, from the pure bred Manchu to the mongrel Turk, all mingled together. The last constitutes the rural population of the country, and on market-days is found in the city crowding its alleys to impassability, and completely transforming its appearance for the ten or twelve hours of daylight. To the traveller coming from India, and mixing in the scene, the change is complete, and he almost fancies himself in some country town of Eastern Europe. In place of the dark skins, lithe forms, and airy drapery on the south of the passes, he finds a people of so light a complexion that an Indian in their crowd shows like a black sheep in the fold; he sees bulky frames that do not lose in height what they gain in breadth; and his eyes meet, in place of the delicate folds of muslin and gauze, or the close shapes of calico and print, the loose robes of buckram and frieze, or the capacious wraps of bold-coloured silks and heavy fur.

He will observe, doing their marketing, groups of women with rosy complexions and comely features, who will remind him—they did me of a market scene I witnessed some years ago in Buda Pesth—of what he has seen nearer home, if he come from mid-Europe. He will not fail to note how European is their gait and deportment, and, may be, he will recognise familiar forms in their dress. At all events, the low curtsy with which a passing friend is greeted, and his low bow of acknowledgment in return, will not be the least of the links that he will find of familiar home customs.

If he respond to the loud, sharp, business-like invite of "mine host" of the restaurant, he will enter a small cabaret, in which there is everything but the liquor. He will take his seat at the table with others on the bench, which might have been made by an English carpenter for any difference perceptible in it, and before he has had time to admire the handsome china bowls, or the well-known "willow-pattern" plates, and the novel porcelain spoons, or to scan the contents of the dishes before him, or yet to notice the undisturbed composure of his neighbours as they ladle away their bowls of soup, or finger their portions of pilao, he will be attended by a veritable waiter, napkin on arm, and as glib with his "tacsir" as is his English *confrère* with his "yes-sir." There are soups of vermicelli, maccaroni, and other forms of paste, which one might naturally have looked for at a French or Italian table, but not expected here. There are stews, and ragouts, and messes of rice, mutton, and vegetables, all boiled together in curds and whey, or in their own soup. There are joints of mutton, beef, and horse, both roast and boiled—not torn with the fingers as in Afghanistan, but carved with the knife. There is pastry of all sorts, meat pies and jam pies, and pies of mince. There are puddings, too, in variety, but none so filling as the cakes of simple dough and fat; and amongst them there is the *zanbosa*, or, "lady's kiss," that baked pasty—tell-tale of Tatar taste in Andijan whence they come—redolent of onion and garlic, and crammed with odds and ends of gristle and fat; and there is its counterpart the *mantu* or "You and I," the pasty cooked by steam, and like the other, special favourite of the Andijani. Finally, there are salads of carrot, radish, and onion chopped fine, and cress and mustard in the leaf.

He will eat his fill, and pay his five or six pence for an excellent dinner without comment or objection from a soul, and may issue to elbow his way through the jostling crowd in search of other surprises. He will find other similar little establishments, table and kitchen all in one room, full of hungry peasants who have done their bartering, or merely come for a holiday dinner; and if he inquires, he will learn that the same busy scene is repeated here every Monday and Thursday, when the country comes and dines in town. He will also be told that formerly in these shops there used to be various other dishes of dog, cat, and rat dressed to suit the Chinese palate; but these, with the pig, and ass, are now prohibited under Islam as unlawful, together with the religion that in the midst of plenty could prefer such diet; and that with them went the spirits and other liquors which formed a chief attraction at these eating-houses; and that their place is now held uncontested by the *chaigun*, and what here now passes for tea.

In his tour through the bazars he will find the butchers' and bakers' shops as crowded by country purchasers as are the drapers' market and the stalls where, on these busy days, boots, and hats, and ready-made furs, and other clothes are exposed for sale; and he will see that cotton (yarn, and cloth), with poultry, corn, and live stock, are as ready mediums of exchange as the more convenient though less abundant coin.

If he turn out of the crowd to take his way by the less frequented streets to the cattle market outside the Cawughat gate, he will find there a jostling crowd similar to that he has just left; and as in the city, so here, he will find as many mounted as on foot, and as many sightseers as purchasers. He will see horses exchanged for cows, or cows for sheep, or, may be, a Calmac youth for

a fur coat, or a Khitay girl for a silk robe, or *vice versa*, and each or all he may also see sold for money. And on the open spaces in the crowd surging about over the uneven ground, or at the corner of some house, he will find the *bacsi* or "minstrel," guitar in hand, accompanying the soft strains of his voice with the music of its cords for the entertainment of the group of admiring rustics gathered round him. Or he will see, as he did in the city, some sage old fortune-teller seated in a retired corner with his confiding boor, and with each throw of the dice increasing the wistful expectancy of his client's looks by a solemn consultation of the pages of his astrological calendar, which he opens deliberately with a preliminary adjustment of the spectacles, and closes with reverence, keeping a finger always between the pages of last reference.

In all the dense crowd, of perhaps eighteen or twenty thousand men and women, jumbled together on foot or on horseback, he will hear a hum of voices, but no discord or disturbance will he see, and before sunset he will find the streets empty; and so they will remain till next market-day. If the reader will accompany me, we will visit the city together on one of its quiet days, attended, of course, by the cicerone appointed by the Dadkhwah, an official who shows his devotion to his master by hovering about our door to follow us like a shadow the moment we step beyond, except that his voice and presence are such provoking realities.

Mounting our horses, for everybody here with any pretensions to respectability rides, we set out after breakfast, and passing out of the close walls of our residency, emerge into the main street leading from the fort gate to the *Ordá* or "Court," the palace of the Dadkhwah. We turn to the left and make for the gate, a couple of

hundred yards or so to our front. On the way we encounter a group of horsemen who, our attendant informs us, are soldiers just returned from a tour of service on the Turfan frontier, and they are now going to pay their respects to the governor, who will hold a court for their reception at noon.

They are Capchac and Uzbak warriors from Andijan, fine soldierly fellows, wearing an air of conscious superiority, and as they pass look us full in the face with an expression of mingled curiosity and goodwill. We observe their gaudy-coloured robes, presents in lieu of pay on their furlough; and the richly embroidered silk saddle-cloths of some of them, samples of the plunder on the frontier.

We pass out of the gate—its guard seated in the verandah of their guard-room just as we always find them, and motionless and silent as blocks of wood—on to the open space which, at its further end, conducts through a wide street of booths to the city gate facing us at about five hundred yards to the east. Here we find a number of ragged Chinese converts—the Yangi Musalmans of to-day, the Khitay of a few years ago—hanging about to do odd jobs for the soldiers, or any passer-by; to hold a horse, or go a message, or carry a bundle. They are not all of this place, but include amongst them the captives of war from the towns to the eastward as far away as Orumchi and Manas. How they live nobody knows, except that they sleep in the stables, and outhouses of the barracks, and are passed as drudges from the possession of one soldier to that of another.

There is one of them carrying a tray of sweetmeats and biscuits supported by a cord round the nape, and selling them for the baker who employs him. His best customers are his own brethren, whose coppers he collects

as soon as earned; for with them he only deals for cash. From him our attention is attracted by the long tresses of a woman we are overtaking on the road. They are braided into two substantial plaits of glossy black, which hang down the back, and taper to points nearly reaching the heels. She looks up at us as we pass, and we see an unveiled face of almost pink complexion, and strongly-marked Tatar features of no very great claim to comeliness. She wears a round cap of silk brocade, with a deep border of otter-fur, and, though the air is freezing, displays a white muslin mantle over the quilted cloak covering her under shift. Her feet are cased in boots of shagreen, decorated with silk embroidery worked in bright patterns of yellow and red, whilst their upper part is concealed by the similarly decorated legs of loose pantaloons. She is a native of the country, and wife of an Andijan soldier, and is, in full dress, going to visit a neighbour hard by. We go on, and entering the gate encounter two matronly dames astride their donkeys coming out. They are enveloped in loose over-cloaks of glazed indigo blue cotton, and are propped insecurely on their steeds just like a bundle of clothes, except that a long brown boot hangs on each side, and a face shows above with the veil thrown back over the top of the round hat.

The worthy ladies are evidently shortsighted, and we are not distinguished till close upon them. Their instinct of propriety produces a sudden effort to veil the faded beauty of bygone years, and its violence upsets one of them on to the ground. A snuffseller sitting on the side of the passage, with his stock of the coarse green powder piled in little heaps on a tray beside him, jumps up, and, raising the fallen dame to her feet, hustles her into a side passage, with voluble upbraiding for so far

forgetting the modesty of the sex as to essay the passage occupied by foreign men.

We proceed, and passing a row of six or seven open stalls on each side—the shops of grocers, fruiterers, locksmiths, tobacconists, &c., turn off to the right to visit the boot and hat market. The first few houses are open stalls for the sale of meat, vegetables, fruits, &c., with a baker's and a cook's shop. Beyond are the blank mud walls, and battered doors of private dwellings. The street is almost empty, and its dirt, and the decay of the walls, are noticed in the absence of the concealing crowd of market-day.

The doors are almost all open, and seated inside, or immediately outside, we see the gudewife with her children. She is stitching a shirt or working embroidery, and they are toddling about in boots nigh as big as themselves, or busy with mud pies. At some of the doors are seen young girls plying the needle, and in others—and many of them—is set the *beshic* or "rocking cradle" with its little occupant rolled up in swaddlings and corded like a mummy. The infant is set out to sleep in the open air, and lies on a mattress, but has no coverlet. The mattress is provided with a round hole in its centre, and, by a very ingenious and peculiar device, the occupant is protected from the risks of wet linen freezing about the person. The instrument is called *shumac* and is made of wood in the shape of a common tobacco-pipe, and is seen for sale in the shops hung up in strings by the gross. We pass a doorway within which are seen two horses turning an oil-mill, and alight to examine it. It is exactly similar to those used in the Panjab, and occupies a shed something like a stable. A man attended by three youths, who take

it in turn to serve the mill, tells us the linseed is all grown in the country, and is the only source of their oil, whilst the cake is a nourishing addition to the winter fodder of their cattle. A little way on we turn out of this unfrequented street to the left, and where it branches off find a soldier armed with the prong-rest gun of his country standing on sentry. He looks down three avenues, and is quite alone, and on foot. A few steps in our turn bring us to one of the many *kol* or "tanks" of this city. The road goes on two sides of it, and on the others are private houses, whose courts open on to it. Its surface is frozen two or three inches thick, but broken at the sides for the people to draw their daily supplies. Through the open doors of the courts we see as we pass a horse and two cows tethered in one, and in another we see the family at work cleaning cotton of its seeds by means of the *chighric.* This is a gin formed of two rollers fitted close one above the other upon a wood frame which is of two different kinds. In both the upper roller is of wood, and the lower of iron; and they are turned together in the same direction by a three-toothed cog, which in the one is worked by a crank handle, and in the other by an eccentric wheel revolved by a foot-board. The old man, seated on a high stool, works the latter, and his more youthful partner, squatted on the ground, the other. The cotton is held in between the rollers on one side, and passes out at the other by their revolution, leaving its seeds behind. Beyond, we see a group of men round a farrier's shop, the most notable part of the surroundings of which are the parallel bars, such as one sees in a gymnastic yard. He is shoeing the horse belonging to one of his customers, whilst three or four others are waiting their turn. The farrier is an old Chinaman by birth, a new Musalman

by force. He has lost his tail with his liberty, and changed his national dress for that of the Tatars of the place. But spectacles are not, luckily for him, included in the long list of things prohibited by the intolerant Islam of the present *régime*, and consequently their great round discs of crystal stand upon each cheek, on either side the nose as bridge, by a brass handle connecting them, and supporting them by a projecting arm against the forehead. His instruments and apparatus are, like himself, of Chinese introduction, and, by their peculiarity, claim attention. So we stop to watch his operations.

His restive subject is reduced to quiet submission by being slung off the ground between the parallel bars which stand at the side of the street in front of the shop, whilst his hoofs are treated in turn at leisure. The old shoes and nails are removed by pincers, and the hoof pared and levelled by a coarse rasp. No knife or cutting instrument is used. New shoes are then adjusted, and secured by nails driven home with a hammer, and finally the feet are rested on a block, and the projecting nails are blunted off by a long stick tipped with iron. This is used standing upright with a hammer applied to the upper end. The horse is now set free from the sling, and another takes his place.

We go on, and enter the bazar. It presents a quiet scene, with few people moving about, and several of the shops closed. The stalls which we found on market-day so full of furs, and hats, and boots, and so overflowing with animation are quite empty, and the ovens of the pastry-cook are without their fire. So dismounting we make over our horses to the grooms riding behind, and turn back to go down the length of the bazar, whose roadway is covered by a loose thatch of reeds, and withies by way of protection from the summer's sun.

On either side is a long raised platform, on the divisions of which are displayed in baskets, and wood trays, the wares of the shop behind each. They are now open to the street, but at sunset will be closed by shutters of broad boards, and the passage door at one side will be the entrance to the house behind it. During daylight the owner sits amongst his stock, wrapped up in the capacious folds of his loose bundles of clothes, his head bowed dreamily under the weight of his turban, till some customer rouses him from his reverie.

Here is a general dealer encased in a succession of choghas, or, as they are here called, *juba*, the many layers of which swell him out to the proportions of a dropsical giant. He has a store of cheap hand-mirrors, and clasp-knives, lucifer-boxes, and bottles of scent, and he has painted little cardboard boxes full of beads, and buttons of coloured glass of all shapes and sizes, and packets of needles, which, like all his other wares, are wrapped in Russian covers, and bear Russian labels, though, as in this particular case of the needles, the inner cover sometimes tells of English origin. He has the *shumac* hung by the gross upon strings, and he has ready-made plaits of hair, which explain the length of the tresses we admired on the fair Tatar we overtook at the outset of our excursion. He has cotton print handkerchiefs of bright patterns, and others of more practical purpose, with the map of Russia, and her railways, stamped in clear lines upon it.

His neighbour is a druggist, and the platform in front of his shop is covered with a close array of baskets, and bags propped open by their contents, which are bordered by the openings rolled up as a rim. They are mostly Indian drugs and spices, such as caraway and cardamum, cinnamon and ginger amongst the latter, whilst amongst

the former are senna and long pepper, and the nuts of the emblic and water-lily, with those of the strychnos nux vomica. This last is seen in quantity in all such shops, and is in general use in the form of decoction as a tonic and restorative in cases of dyspepsia, produced by the abuse of opium and bang. Amongst his stock of indigenous products are the flower-buds of an artemisia called *tukhm*, and used as a hair wash, and the *toghraghu*, which is a fungus decay of the bark of the poplar of the desert, and is used in powder as a ferment in baking, and also as a cataplasm for wounds and boils.

The druggist, besides dispensing his drugs, prescribes their use, if the purchaser so desire, for in this country medical science has no professed practitioners, and everybody is his own doctor. His scales and weights are of Chinese origin and names. The latter consist of neat little brass cubes with a Chinese stamp of their values, and the former of the ordinary double scale balance. But he uses more frequently for the less bulky substances another form of weighing machine also of Chinese make. It consists of a single scale, and horizontal beam balance. It is poised by a cord a little on one side of the attachment of the pan, and the weight slides backwards and forwards on a graduated scale marked on the beam.

We pass on amongst similar shops, and stop to look at that of an ironmonger. His stock consists of shovels, and mattocks, and locks, sticks of bar iron, chains and hooks, and odds and ends of all sorts, bridle bits and stirrups. He has also an assortment of crude minerals in wood trays. There is salt in flat cakes as gathered on the desiccated pools of the desert. It requires a formal introduction, so completely have its impurities disguised its identity. There are massive crystals of alum, and sulphate of copper, and sal ammoniac, all from the vol-

canic region of Acsu, and lumps of yellow ochre from the same locality. There are nuggets of antimony from China. They are wrapped in paper packets, and, in place of the bright metallic lustre of the native ore, present a black appearance, cast in small moulded shapes, as if prepared for immediate use; and their fitness for which is evidenced by their staining the fingers in handling, as well as the paper that covers them.

Our friend of the shop bears the name of his trade, and is called Timurchi, "Ironmonger." He is rough and hard in appearance and manner as the rusty wares and crude stores he presides over. He answers our questions, always looking across our shoulders at the cicerone behind us, and with a betrayed air of hesitation. "You say this alum comes from Badakhshan? They told us in a shop higher up that it came from Acsu." My remark was altogether unexpected, and Timurchi, in his precipitation, replied, "So it does. Everybody knows it comes from Acsu." But his confusion was covered by the adroit interposition of its cause, who stepped forwards, and, pretending to examine a lump he had taken in his hand, exclaimed, "Yes. But the best kind comes from Badakhshan, and is what all the tanners and dyers here use."

With this sample of our guide's duplicity we will leave this bazar, and make for the cloth market. We pass by a detour through two or three winding alleys, with solitary passengers here and there stepping their way mid street, and see nothing more noticeable than the mangy, wolfish dogs snoozing on the roadside dung heaps, too lazy to do more than snarl as we pass, and the numbers of children about the doorways, amusing themselves with infantile predilection in the dirt of the gutters. In a wider part of the road the lofty portals

of an ancient building in the Arabic style of architecture, and overtopping all the surrounding dwellings, attracts attention on account of its masonry and tiles in the midst of mud walls. It is a *madrassa* or "college," and is one of twenty-eight or thirty similar establishments in this city. Across the court, and opposite to the gate is the mosque, and on each side of it is a row of eight or ten chambers, the quarters of divinity students, for only the doctrine of Islam is taught within its walls. The students come out of their cells to survey the intruder, but his guide is sufficient guarantee of his protection, and no sign of objection is observed. They are about thirty in number, and most of them are men of mature age who, though perhaps rich in theological lore, are very poor in worldly store. They here find a happy asylum, and are enabled with their families to stave off the hardships of poverty as pensioners on the charity of the establishment endowed by some pious muslim of a by-gone age for the support of necessitous students. A small gold piece is gratefully accepted by the Shekh, and his pupils, repeating with him a benediction on the bestower, stroke their beards in concert to the "Amen" as we pass out to resume our tour.

Passing along a quiet street in which a shop or two here and there interrupts the line of walls of private dwellings, a lively hum of voices proceeding from one of them excites a natural inquiry. "That's a *maktab*," responds our guide. So we gently push open the door we find ajar, and enter to inspect the school. It is a low-roofed "tween deck" sort of saloon ranged with forms on each side a central alley, up and down which an assistant tutor, cane in hand, paces, flipping an idle boy now on one side, and now on the other between the turns of his short beat. On a low platform inside the door at

one side sits the master with all the importance of grave looks and spectacles; and around him are seated the most advanced pupils, some six or eight boys of from fourteen to eighteen years of age. They are reading Persian books, and writing from dictation.

The room is cram full of children, and its atmosphere stifling; and, though only about twenty-four feet by sixteen, it contained upwards of fifty children (we counted fifty-eight) disposed on the forms, and in two small galleries like bunks under the roof on each side. Our entrance produced no cessation of the din of voices gabbling over the creed, and first principles of Muhammadan belief; on the contrary, encouraged by our attention, the active little creatures swayed their bodies and vociferated with increased energy, and it required a vigorous flourishing of the cane to stop the mechanical repetition of lessons once set agoing.

The children were mostly very young, from six or eight to ten years of age, and had a wonderfully European look with their fair rosy complexions. On one side were two forms, and a gallery occupied by about twenty little girls. Some of them were very gentle little souls, with innocent features of the fairest pink and white; and they looked very pretty in their round fur hats, and white frocks, and neat boots. Some pennies (or the coppers that represented them) distributed amongst them elicited just the signs of delight one witnesses amongst school children at home.

We go on our way, and meet a knife-grinder trundling his wheel, and announcing his calling to the exact tune of him of England. He is to all appearance the same being, the machine is identical, and the call absurdly like. But for the other surroundings one might fancy himself in some by-way of London. And to complete the illusion,

here comes the pie-man wheeling his barrow, and calling his customers with what for the sound may well be, "Come buy! Come buy! Pies hot—pies cold! Pies new—pies old." His whole get up, cart and all are strange reminders of home scenes in this distant clime, and even the pies he sells are not so different from those of the old country.

We enter the cloth market, a long row of shops on either side a winding street which is roughly roofed in with a spread of reeds and maize straw for shade, and find the best and richest bazar in the city. Here are shops of all sorts, and merchants of different kinds.

Here is an Andijani cutler. His floor counter is covered with sheath knives by the hundred, all bright and sharp as a razor; his shelves are full of brass and iron-plated flint and steel cases of which the leather is nigh concealed by the metallic ornament; whilst his walls are hung with bundles of knife sheaths and leather belts of strong buff.

Then we stop at a draper's. Its owner, a Kashmir emigrant, or an Arghun—his descendant by a mother of the country. He has a rich stock of cotton prints, calicos, and chintzes, with the coloured silks of Khocand and of Khutan displayed in folded lengths on his boards, or hanging in pieces from cords stretched across between the posts that support his shop verandah. He can produce at a few minutes' notice from the recesses of his store flowered muslins, and brocades of silk or gold, satins and velvets, and broadcloths, and will point to the English marks on the stuffs as proof of their superior excellence.

There are several similar shops, and in few are the Russian trade-marks seen, though the fabrics of that country are stored in most of them in the form of coarse

cottons of patterns in vogue amongst this people. Our Kashmiri or Arghun, as the case may be, greets us with a smiling countenance, and, with the pronunciation peculiar to his people, explains in fluent Hindustani all we wish to know, besides all he wishes to tell us of his loyal feelings, and his own special pleasure in seeing us here.

Even the rough Afghans, who hang about his shop to while away the weary days till their caravan gets the permit to march, join him in welcoming our presence as the presage of better times in store for all; whilst the Sikh from the Panjab, who here disposes piece-meal of the venture he has brought over the passes, considers himself as one of ourselves, and metamorphosed as he is in the costume of the country, salutes us as old friends in the deferential style of his people, and is proud to display his acquaintance with the king's guests on the scene of his daily chaffering.

Amongst others, we stop to overhaul a second-hand clothes mart, a sort of pawnbroker's and old curiosity shop combined. Here is a medley of all sorts of things appraised at chance prices apparently from day to day by the snuffy and goitrous Yarkandi who lives amongst them. There are patched sheepskin coats, and quilted cotton cloaks renovated by a fresh dyeing. There are old bits of china, cracked violins, and an American clock that does not figure. There are bits of jade amulets, and charms, and mouth-pieces for pipes of the same mineral, with great beads of agate and crystal, all of very inferior quality and no better price. There are Chinese chop-sticks and fans, and writing-cases, spectacles, purses, and ear-cases edged with fur. There are also Chinese cloaks of costly fur, and rich silk robes embroided in grand designs of dragons and flowers, with

mantles of linen gauze artistically woven in varied patterns, and, in great diversity, many other relics of the late rulers—all now becoming scarce curiosities, and disappearing from the scene of the revolution which transferred them from the possession of their owners to the hands of the rabble plunderers; from which they have filtered through different channels to the shop before us, and are all more or less stained, and worn, and injured, in token of the rough usage and varied fortunes they have experienced.

We turn off out of the bazar, to work our way homewards, after an inspection of one of its book-shops. The volumes are mostly Turki manuscripts on religious subjects, but amongst them there are some lithographed books on medicine, history, and theology, and all in Persian from India. We search in vain for any historical records of the country, or for any native literature in poetry or in prose. Such works do exist, but are sacredly guarded in the monasteries attached to the many shrines of the country, or are concealed in the possession of private individuals.

As we proceed we come to a group of men and boys around a party of dancing dervishes. The rogues brave the cold in their tatters, and drown care in the wild song of their calling, and free life of their selection. They wear a high-peaked conical hat with a bushy edging of fur, and carry a leopard, or antelope, or other skin hanging on the back. Swung in front from the neck is the beggar's trough, and in the hand is a stout club, or an iron mace set with jingling rings. This last is the music that accompanies their song, and gives the time to their step in the dance. They are an idle, worthless set, but here meet a willingly-accorded protection, and for the nonce, on this occasion, restrained the wonted fanaticism

of their class to receive our coin of conciliation with every mark of gratitude.

On our way we see a fine new masonry building, its straight lines and squares of brick and mortar showing in the midst of the decayed walls and mud houses besetting it like a new patch on an old garment. It is the Andijan Sarae, built by the present ruler for the accommodation of the merchants visiting his country.

We walk in, and find its comfortable quarters occupied by merchants from Orenburgh, and Tashkand, and Almati, and elsewhere from Russian territory. They are Musalmans, and very civilly invite us to partake of the tea they are drinking. We find their bales consist of madder, and bar iron, and iron cauldrons, brass candlesticks, loaf and candy sugar, tea, and cotton prints. They cover the area of the court, and are seen through its grating piled up in the cellars below. Their owners are taking in return felts and carpets from Khutan, with its silk and cotton as part of their exchange. They are finer looking, and better dressed men than those usually seen in the place, and have amongst them some perfect strangers to the country—merchants supposed to hail from Moscow; and apparently they all live very much apart to themselves in the Sarae. In the hands of one of them is a *schot*, or calculating machine. It is a sort of ready-reckoner, and consists of an oblong frame of wood, on which are filed upon wires a number of balls of different colours for units, tens, &c. These are run from side to side of the wires according to the rules for the use of the instrument, and afford an easy method of calculating long sums.

Having done the city we mount again, and on the way back sum up the total of our experiences, and draw our conclusions therefrom—not forgetting, however, to

note such objects *en route* as may for the moment divert the current of our thoughts.

The most interesting result of this visit to the city is the new aspect in which it has shown the people to us in their ordinary every-day life, and we are pleased to perceive that the unfavourable impression produced by the concentrated ugliness and inferiority of the crowd, which so excited our curiosity and attention on the day of our arrival, loses very much of the repulsive character it then presented by dispersion and intermixture with the softer faces of women, and more attractive features of youth. But it is by no means removed, for the hideous goitre meets us in every street and alley, the huge worm-like mass of its tortuous vessels dragging down the features, and drawing the eyes forward almost on to the cheeks of a naturally unattractive countenance; or, in less exaggerated development, marring by its distorted swellings the comeliness of some fair feminine face; or, even in its incipient growth, destroying the charm of infantile beauty.

It is the prevalence of this unsightly deformity, coupled with the sallow complexions and sickly looks which too often meet the gaze in the bye-ways and bazars of the city, that so detracts now from the agreeable impression produced by the concourse in its thoroughfares of the rural population in holiday dress on market day. The life and activity of that bustling scene, with its varied Tatar costumes, and faces ruddy with the glow of health are nowhere seen to-day. The citizens have put by their good clothes, and in their shops and work-rooms quietly employ themselves in the ordinary pursuits of their daily life—in the bazars minding the shop, and in the alleys dyeing the cloths they will expose for sale on market day, or making the boots, and trimming the hats which, with

fur coats and silk-embroidered shirts, &c. they will barter with the peasant or, preferably, sell to him for the coin he has just realised outside in exchange for his farm produce.

Industry and quiet are now the order of the day; and here comes, just entering from a side street, the officer charged with the duty of maintaining their proper observance. He is the Cazi Raís, or chief magistrate of the city, and is going his daily round of the bazars as a warning to gamblers and idlers, and those who neglect the call to prayers, no less than as the examiner of weights and measures, and protector of the people from the frauds of the grocer and butcher. He is riding attended by his secretary also mounted, and is preceded by six men in two rows of three abreast, marching with slow and measured step. Each of them carries his badge of office, the *dira*. It is a broad thong of leather fixed in a handle of wood, and is held in the hand with the strap resting on the shoulder. He turns down the way we are going, so we fall back to follow his procession. The people pass on either side with a respectful bow to the Cazi, placing the folded hands upon the stomach, and bending with a sudden jerk as if twinged with a cramp there. The women, if not already veiled according to the requirements of the strictly enforced *shara'*, rapidly pull down that unwonted square piece of network, which when the censor is not in the way is often thrown up over the hat, and running to one side stand with their faces to the wall, or if there be an open door, or a convenient passage, disappear into its hiding. One of them has not only forgotten her veil, but is so preoccupied in mind that she does not notice the censors till close upon them, and hurriedly turns to the shelter of the wall. Her neglect of the duty imposed by Islam,

however, has not escaped the sharp eye of the Cazi Raïs, who in passing utters a few words of reproachful exhortation, the force of which is impressed with four or five quick whacks of the *dira* upon the offending head, and upon the shoulders under which it immediately ducks.

The party, after passing a number of shops, stops at that of a grocer, and proceeds to examine his weights. The secretary pronounces all right on the word of the *dira* bearers, and the "Cazi Raïs" proceeds. One of the many bakers' shops is next selected. His flour is found to be adulterated with earth, and he is summarily condemned to a drubbing, whilst the spoiled meal is confiscated. He is led out into the street in front of his shop, and there well whacked about the head and body without much harm corporeally, and with very salutary effect morally.

A butcher escapes similar chastisement on satisfactory explanation that some diseased meat found on his counter was the portion reserved to appease the savage curs besetting his shambles. And then, the procession diverging from our route, we go on our way, and passing a nest of beggars, veritable outcasts, and the most disgusting specimens of mankind I have seen—blind, leprous, and goitrous, who grovel in the filth of some low hovels built against the base of a high wall near the gate at which we entered, and live and breed on the charity of wayfarers—we leave the city, and return to our quarters by the way we went out, well pleased with the day's excursion, if not fully satisfied in respect to the preconceived notions of its population and wealth which we had formed from the accounts that had reached us in India. Its bazars are decidedly poor in comparison with those of any Indian city of the same class, and indeed presented no

such display in point of value as we saw on our return to India in the native bazar at Simla. The ordinary traffic in its streets too is not to be compared with the everyday life of an Indian city, and struck me as very much less than what we saw in the thoroughfares of Srinaggar. The people are warmly and comfortably clad, as the necessities of this climate require. But there is as a rule nothing rich about their dress, and ornaments of gold or silver, or gems, are rarely or ever seen except in some of the shops as curiosities of the Chinese customs. What the display may be in the privacy of the *harem* can only be conjectured from samples of embroidered veils studded with rubies and pearls on a border of gold fringe, and of gold and red coral ear-drops, and of bracelets chased with simple designs, and set with emeralds and turquoise, which we saw as articles for sale, with other trinkets of the Tatar boudoir. In fact ornaments are not the fashion, in public at all events, and the jeweller's shop is as scarce in the bazars as the booksellers. The city has no special manufactures of any importance. It has a local reputation, however, for the superiority of the leather cured within its walls, and its boots and shoes are esteemed for their excellence in all parts of the territory. This industry, with those of the furrier and hatter, employs some hundreds of families, but the products of their labour do not pass beyond the limits of the neighbouring states of the country, Khutan in one direction and Acsu in the other.

Under the Chinese the jade trade was specially encouraged, and the industry employed several thousands of families here, and at Khutan, and at the quarries in the Caracash valley, as did the gold mines in the southern hills. But since their expulsion from the country these occupations, except in the case of one

gold mine near Khutan, have entirely ceased, and as regards the jade industry may be considered extinct. Even during the Chinese rule it appears that the best specimens of this highly-prized mineral were taken in block to China, and there confided to the artist's skill. I made particular inquiries after samples of the carved stone, and quite exceptionally succeeded in getting some good pieces cut in the Indian style, and apparently of ancient date. Much secrecy was observed in admitting the fact of their existence through fear of their passing summarily at a nominal valuation into the hands of the rulers, and when I got them they bore stains of mud as if they had been secreted under ground. The seller informed me that they had employed two generations of artists in their manufacture, and that the Chinese owner would have willingly sacrificed his life to retain them as heirlooms in his family. Be this as it may he has certainly lost his life without the fulfilment of the proviso, or even a chance of its offer.

There are no jade artists or miners now to be found here, and all that at present meets the inquiry for the mineral by Russian traders for the China market is what was left in the country by the Chinese. Some of the best pieces of both white and green jade used to be dug up in a deserted channel of the Khutan river in the vicinity of that city.

CHAPTER IX.

A SALUTE of seven guns at sunset on the 21st November announced the conclusion of the "*Ramazan*"—a fast which here seems to sit very lightly upon the majority, much as their prayers do, for both are neglected on trivial pretences by all but the priesthood class—and a similar salute at daylight ushered in the "*Id.*" The festival, however, had been already inaugurated amongst the troops, who kept the night alive with the noise of their musical instruments in the barracks around us.

This day had been fixed for the departure of Haji Tora for Kashghar, and it was arranged that we should follow a week later. He set out accordingly with his staff of Turkish officers, and the presents from Constantinople, after the conclusion of the "Id" prayers. The envoy accompanied by some of his staff paid him a visit to bid him farewell, whilst Colonel Gordon and Captain Biddulph went over to the Dadkhwah on the part of the envoy with the "Id" presents and congratulations.

In the afternoon we visited the city expecting to see a crowd of holiday folks there, but found the bazars very thinly attended, owing probably to the usual market gathering having been held on the previous day. The troops recently arrived from Manas and the Turfan frontier appeared there in force, and amongst them I noticed several with very marked Manchu features, and just the long thin moustache, and wiry chin tuft one sees in pictures of their race.

In our several visits to the city we never heard the sounds of music or song, except the ravings of the *darvesh*, and the recitations of the *bacsi*, if they can be so classed. There are nevertheless professed musicians of no mean talents according to the standard of the country, but they only perform at private entertainments.

The Dadkhwah, to make sure we did not leave the place under the impression that the horribly harsh and discordant noises of his military band were the proper and only representatives of the music of the country, very obligingly sent a party of professionals to give us a specimen of the real art. The company consisted of five performers. One played upon a reed pipe like a flageolet (*balawan*), and another upon a violin of eight strings (*rabab*); two of them played upon tambourines (*daff*) which had jingling rings of steel round the circumference, and the other performed on a sort of harp (*canún*) or piano with eighteen double wires and two single stretched across a sounding board. The performance was in concert, and accompanied by the voices of the two who played the stringed instruments. The songs they sung were Turki love ditties, and the airs were peculiarly soft and harmonious. There was nothing discordant, though there seemed a monotonous repetition of tune. But the combined effect of their execution was on the whole pleasing, and in itself not without merit. The *canún* player used a steel plectrum, and stopped the vibrations of the wires by a tap with the fingers of the other hand.

Seventy-five mule-loads of our camp and heavy baggage having gone ahead in carts—neat, light wagons resembling those of Europe, and drawn by three or four horses, one in the shafts and the others abreast in front

—we took leave of the Dadkhwah, and set out on our journey to the court of Atalik Ghazi.

Muhammad Yunus considered his position in this country as *dadkhwah* of Yarkand equivalent to that of the lieutenant-governor of a province in India, and did not deem it necessary to return the visit of the envoy, but got over any little difficulty in the matter by inviting us all to breakfast on the day preceding our departure, and the opportunity served for us to take leave of him, and thank him for his hospitality and attentions.

We left the Yangishahr of Yarkand at about eight A.M. on the 28th November, and marched twenty-five miles to Kok Rabat, where we found quarters in the rest-house. It is similar to that at Karghalik, and like it and others we occupied, only used by the king, and the guests whom he chooses to honour.

Our route passed round the north side of the fort, and at about four miles crossed the Opah river by a newly built bridge, the ornamental towers at each end of which are not quite finished. Beyond it we passed amongst scattered homesteads to Cara Cum, or "Black Sand," a mile and a half further on, and alighted for the *dasturkhwan* at a peasant's house which had been cleared for our reception. It stood on the verge of a sandy waste which we, on resuming the route, traversed for ten miles to Rabatchi. This last is a long strip of farmsteads running east and west on the course of a small perennial stream. At half way to it we passed the roadside post-stage, or *ortang*, of Sughuchak, where are a few trees and eight or ten huts clustered together. All the rest of this bit of the road is a waste dotted with saline pools, patches of reeds and tamarisks, and camel's thorn scattered over a surface covered with saline encrustations, and thrown into hillocks of blown sand. And

here and there, at distant intervals on its wide extent, appeared a few isolated shepherd's huts.

From Rabatchi to Kok Rabat the road lies across similar country, with scattered homesteads extending some way out on its surface. Kok Rabat is a settlement of about two hundred homesteads which spread east and west over a considerable surface. Our next stage was Kizili, thirty miles. The route went N.W. across a gravelly desert the horizon of which met and mingled with an atmosphere of dense haze. Its surface, bare and undulating, gently sloped to the west up to some low ridges of clay projecting on to it from under a veil of haze which concealed all beyond from view. The air was keen (the thermometer stood at 18° F. as we set out), and was rendered sharper by a cold north wind.

At half way—a little beyond the ruins of a former post-stage—we alighted for the *dasturkhwan* at Ac Rabat, or "The white hostel." This is a small post-stage enclosed within walls, and has accommodation for a score of horses. It is kept by a party of four or five men, and is the only habited spot on this march. There are two wells of brackish water here; one on the road and the other inside the *rabat*. In the latter, which is a very narrow shaft, the water was ninety-eight feet down, and disagreeably salt.

Near this place we were met by Khal Muhammad, a confidential servant of Atalik Ghazi, who has the rank of *Pánsad Báshi* or "Commandant of five hundred." He was accompanied by twenty troopers, or *jigit* as the cavalry soldier is here called, and had been sent out from Yangi Hissar by his master to welcome, and do honour to the envoy, and conduct his party to the capital. His men like himself wore a very strange uniform, which

was admirably adapted to the climate and country at this season.

It consisted of a whole suit of yellow buff leather. The conical cap was of this material edged with otter fur; and, like the long sheepskin coat, had the wool intact on the inside. The overalls—very capacious bags, called *shim*—in place of the wool were lined with chintz, and decorated at the lower edges, as was the coat, with a thin border of otter fur. Even the boots were of tan leather unblacked. The material of the cap and coat was the same as that of the Kabul *postin*—the peculiar colour and softness being the result of the treatment in curing with pomegranate rinds—but it was altogether without the silk embroidery on the postins of that country, and had no ornamentation at all on those worn by the private troopers. The coat worn by Khal Muhammad had a sort of dragon's head device worked in coloured silks on the back between the shoulders. And this device we subsequently found was the badge of rank, and only allowed to commandants.

This was the only party of troops we saw in uniform during our stay in the country, excepting only the artillery, though there are probably many similarly equipped; for at Kashghar we afterwards met another Pansad Bashi in the same sort of coat as Khal Muhammad wore here, and saw some few of the body guard of Atalik Ghazi in the same uniform as that of this party. The arms of these men were the sword, and percussion rifle with high sights. These last are manufactured in the Atalik's workshops in the Yangishahr of Kashghar, and look very serviceable weapons.

At Kizili we alighted at the Government rest-house, a spacious Sarae opposite the village, and in the afternoon visited the iron furnaces of the place. We found eighteen

or twenty smelting ovens clustered together in the midst of the houses of the workmen. None of them were in work, so we had an opportunity of examining their structure. The furnace is built in the centre of a round pit which is roofed roughly, and it has a narrow chimney four to six feet high, and pierced with air-holes round the base. The charcoal and ore are mixed together in the shaft of the chimney, and the melted metal sinks to a trough below, where the nozzles of two or three bellows appear to have been fixed. The furnaces are very roughly built of clay and stone, and, to judge from the slag lying about them, the smelting appears to be imperfect. The ore is brought from the hills two days' journey to the west, and the quarries are called Timurtagh or "Iron hill," and Kiziltagh or "Red hill." The miners and smelters are said to number two hundred families. Their huts are massed together as in a village, and not scattered about as farmsteads as in the other settlements we have seen in this country. The water here is brackish, and the soil of a reddish colour, whence the name of the place.

Next day we marched to Yangi Hissar—thirty miles—and halted two days. The first ten miles across a waste of thin pasture, on which we passed the little farmstead settlements of Chamalung (where the Chinese had an *ortang* or post-stage), Cuduc, and Cosh Gumbat; and the next four across a desert strip of sands and salines, which extends east and west out of view, and is thinly covered with camel's thorn, tamarisk, saltworts and other desert plants, to Topaluk, or "The dusty place," a settlement of farmsteads running east and west along the course of a small rivulet. We alighted here for the *dasturkhwan* at a peasant's house on the roadside.

At two miles further on we passed the homesteads of

Kalpin, and a little beyond it the ruins of a village of the same name, and then entered on a wide desert tract which rises into hillocks and banks that run from west to east and close the distant view in front. The land here lies low, and is covered with spongy saline encrustations, and saltworts and coarse grass, and is impassable except on the beaten track owing to the pitfalls on its blistered surface. In some parts, our cattle getting off the track sunk to the hocks in a loose pulverulent earth, the nature of which was concealed from view by the plants growing in the saline crust on its surface. As my horse laboured heavily on it, I dismounted, and tried to follow some bustard which had been marked down away to the right, but found the effloresced soil so deep, and the labour of walking on it so fatiguing, that I was glad to leave the game to their safety, and resume my seat in the saddle.

On the other side of this desert tract we came to the Sugat Bulac or "Willow Spring" post house, at the foot of some ridges of gravel and sand which extend across the country from west to east along the course of the Shahnaz river. The road winds amongst these ridges for some miles, and then, passing through a gap, leads across the muddy river by a bridge of rough logs and spars. The stream is dammed just above the bridge, and about the banks on either side are some water-mills on the canals drawn off at this point to the cultivation and farms of Shahnaz. The river here flows in a deep sandy channel between high perpendicular banks of loose earth, and is unfordable on account of its quicksands. It comes down from the low hills on the west, and is exhausted in the irrigation of the lands lower down after a south-easterly course of about twenty-five miles on the plain. Beyond the fields of Shahnaz we crossed

the bare gravelly ridges of Cayragh, and descended to the populous suburbs of Yangi Hissar, which itself is a poor dilapidated little town, protected by a strong fort on the plain to the north. We passed through its bazar, and turning off to the left across some fields, white as snow with their encrustation of salts, alighted at a garden-house which had been prepared for our reception, and was kept by a guard of soldiers. We were to have halted here only one day, but late in the evening of the 1st December a messenger arrived from Kashghar with orders for Khal Muhammad to detain our party here another day. So he explained to the envoy very diplomatically that the Atalik had ordered him to take care that we were not fatigued by over-marching, and that he was to make us comfortable here for to-morrow, and bring us on next day by the usual stages.

On the 3d December accordingly we resumed our march, and alighted at the rest-house of Yapchang, twenty-five miles. Our road took us past the fort, or Yangishahr, of Yangi Hissar, and through a wide street of barracks outside it. There was no parade or display of troops, but we saw some of the soldiers seated under the line of trees in front of their doors, and caught glimpses of the Chinese women—their prizes of war—as they peered at us from the doorways or over the wall. Some of them were in the bloom of youth, and remarkably clear and rosy in complexion.

Clearing the barracks, we went north across a thinly cultivated, and saline impregnated plain which is here traversed by two considerable canals a mile or so apart, and bridged at the road. Beyond them, at about the tenth mile, we passed the farmsteads of Saidlar, and then crossed a wide sandy waste grown over with reeds and saltworts, and here and there covered with stagnant

pools, and stretches of marsh land, in the midst of which, scattered at distant intervals, were a few widely isolated homesteads; and at another five miles or so we came to Sogholuc, where we alighted at a pleasant garden-house for the *dasturkhwan*.

The weather was remarkably fair, and, though the sun was shining brightly, and felt agreeably warm, it had little effect on the ice of the frozen streamlets. The usual haze had disappeared, and the air was clear, and frosty to a degree we had not before experienced, and we got a very extensive view of the country. It presented only a wide plain of undulating sand and gravel, very thinly peopled only in front and behind us, all the rest being a reed-grown waste, here and there broken in its monotonous level by sand dunes. Against the sky to the south and south-west were seen some snowy peaks, and the mountain masses of the Tagharma group in Sarigh Col ("the yellow defile"), whilst directly to the west lay the lower ranges of the Caratagh ("the black mountain.")

Beyond Sogholuc we marched four miles over a wide reed-grown tract, on which the road winds amongst marshes and sand dunes up to the Khan Aric which we crossed by bridge, and following up its marshy curve for some distance crossed a branch canal by bridge, and beyond it entered the cultivation of Yapchang.

Next morning—4th December—we marched to the Yangishahr of Kashghar, fourteen miles. Our route went north-west over a plain of sandy waste similar to that already passed, and still thinly populated, though traversed from west to east by the river Tazghun, and several canals from it, most of which, as is the river, are crossed by rafter bridges. Within thirty minutes of leaving Yapchang we crossed three of these canals by

bridge (they flow in low-banked sandy channels impassable otherwise by reason of quicksands), and then the river, and in fifteen minutes more entered the cultivation of the Tazghun settlement. Beyond its narrow strip, we crossed a saline waste of reeds, and marshes, and pools, and at two hours and ten minutes from Yapchang alighted at a small cluster of huts at the Carasu bridge for the *dasturkhwan.*

The morning air was sharp and frosty. The pools and lesser streams were all frozen, and the larger carried drift ice. Beyond the Carasu, which is about five miles from the Yangishahr, we were met by a party of fifteen or sixteen horsemen headed by Coshbegi Mirza Ahmad, who had been sent out by Atalik Ghazi to welcome the envoy. He is one of the most important men attached to the court, and is the first richly dressed man we have yet seen in the country. He is a fine handsome man, of about forty-five years of age, and has large features, with a full beard, and looks more like an Afghan than a Tatar. He is one of the few men who held rank and position in his own country before he came here; and he figured prominently in the politics of Khocand, where he made an unsuccessful attempt to usurp the throne, and took an active part in the hostilities both against the Russians and against Khudayar Khan. On the capture of Tashkand by the former in 1865, he made an unsuccessful attempt to forestall the latter in the recovery of Khocand, and, on the restoration of the Khan to the throne, was forced to flee the country with many others who had been arrayed against both in the interest of the Capchac party. We did not meet him again after our installation in the Residency.

Beyond Carasu up to the Yangishahr, and to Kashghar five miles further on, the country becomes more

populous and highly cultivated, and farmsteads and fields meet the eye in all directions.

Our road passed some artillery barracks, and then along the east side of the fort round to the Residency, or quarters which had been recently built for our accommodation, immediately opposite the gateway on the north face of Yangishahr, where we alighted at noon. Mirza Ahmad having introduced us to our quarters, and marshalled in the *dasturkhwan*, took leave of the envoy to report arrival to his master.

A couple of hours later Ihrar Khan, Tora, who had previously visited India, and was known to the envoy, came over to conduct us to the presence of Atalik Ghazi, as it was the custom of the country for honoured visitors to be granted an audience to pay their respects to the king immediately on arrival. We accordingly arrayed ourselves in full dress uniform, and followed our chief, who was conducted to the palace by the Tora.

The distance across the road to the fort gate was only a bowshot, and we found but a small crowd of soldiers and camp followers collected as sight-seers. We passed over a drawbridge, and through three gates, one beyond the other at right angles, each with its guard, as at Yarkand, and, dismounting inside the third, walked across an open space to the gate of the palace or *orda*. This is a very unpretending flat-roofed building approached through three courts, the two outer of which were occupied by about 400 men of the king's guard. They were all seated motionless and silent in long rows against the verandah walls.

We passed through the first two courts, and somehow sympathetically became infected with the solemnity and silence that pervaded the air of the place. As we entered through the doorway of the third court, Ihrar

Khan, with a look of serious gravity, motioned a pause, and stepping silently forward peeped into it, and then beckoned us on. Three or four steps brought us through the passage into the oblong court. Two sides were occupied by a verandah, and the other two by blank walls of mud plaster. Under the verandah at the further end, and opening on to its broad floor, was a row of door windows with lattice-work panels; and in the centre of the court was a frozen tank, around which grew some tall poplar trees. There was not a soul in the court but ourselves, and its silence was oppressive. The Tora walked a step or two in front of us with downcast head, folded hands, and silent footfall, and we mechanically followed, stilling the noise of our boots upon the flat-brick paved path as best we could on tip-toe.

At the steps of the verandah our guide, with unrelaxed solemnity of countenance, motioned a halt, and leisurely walking up to the door, disappeared within it. We took the opportunity to whisper to each other as the tone most suited to the dreadful silence of the spot and occasion. After two or three very long minutes the Tora reappeared in the verandah, and beckoning the envoy to advance, motioned the rest of us to stand still.

Our chief entered the doorway, and, as I am informed, walked nearly up the hall, when a middle-sized, stout-built, and plainly dressed man of about fifty years of age entered from an opposite door, and shaking hands, welcomed him to Kashghar. The sounds of conversation reached us in the court, and now the Tora standing in the verandah at the hall door beckoned us one by one, and passed us in. We walked in turn up the hall (a large plain room, like that of the *orda* at Yarkand) to its top, where Atalik Ghazi was seated Turkish fashion

on the floor, with the envoy on his right at one side. Here, being introduced by our chief, we stooped to shake the proffered hand, and bowing our acknowledgements to the sonorous and impassive "*salamat*" of the Atalik's greeting, stepped back to seat ourselves on the cushion in a line below the envoy.

When all were seated the Atalik, with true Oriental solemnity, welcomed the envoy to his country in a few short words, the while folding his hands in the overlapping sleeves of his *juba*. The envoy gracefully acknowledged the compliment, and presented a rifle for the acceptance of our host. It was received with a bow, but no curious examination or inquiry was permitted to disturb the narrow current of the etiquette so rigidly observed in this Court, and then a glance from Atalik Ghazi towards the Tora, who stood inside the door at the further end of the hall, was the signal for the *dasturkhwan*. A low bow and a *tacsir* preceded his exit to order it in. He re-entered immediately, and with a drop on one knee and rapid stroke of the beard whilst muttering a benediction, rose to resume his attitude of respectful attention at the former post.

A file of some twenty-five or thirty soldiers, with their swords slung at the waist, now marched in with the trays of fruits and sweets, and laid them on the Khocand silk table-cloths which were now spread before us by one of their number. This was all done with such studied quiet that the silence of the room was not disturbed by more than the rustle of their silk dresses and sword belts, till the booming of the salute, at this moment fired on the parade near our quarters, suddenly broke the stillness of the palace with the first of fifteen slowly succeeding reports—all in the full force of the honour they were meant to convey. For

this military mode of doing honour was an innovation on the customs of the country; and this was; through the representations of Haji Tora, the first occasion on which the Atalik had so honoured anybody—a course he was led to adopt in recognition of a similar compliment paid to his own envoy, now returned with us, on his reception by the authorities in India.

All this time the Atalik, seated on his crossed heels in the fashion of the country, maintained a dignified silence, and we sat motionless staring at the trays before us, or looking straight in front through the opposite windows into a court beyond in which were loitering a few soldiers gun in hand, or gently turning our eyes upon the personage whose character inspired such awe.

With the last gun of the salute a soldier bearing a tray with two bowls of tea on it approached, and kneeling held it to the Atalik who, relaxing the gravity of his features for the moment, with a gracious smile proffered it to the envoy, and reaching forward to the nearest tray of the *dasturkhwan* took a biscuit, and breaking it handed a morsel to him, and at the same time with a *bismillah* invited us to help ourselves.

The ice of reserve was now cracked, and a conversation between Atalik Ghazi and the envoy followed, interrupted by long pauses of grave silence. His Highness observed, "You have performed a hard journey over bad roads. I hope my officials have attended to your requirements satisfactorily." The envoy assured him we had travelled with comfort, and said how grateful we were for all the attentions shown to us by His Highness.

"You must have found it cold on the march from Yarkand. The frost here has set in hard since four days, and will increase during the next two months." The

envoy, gracefully acknowledging the preparations made for our accommodation, replied that in the comfortable shelter provided by His Highness, the cold would only remind us of our home country.

The Atalik then referred to the envoy's previous visit to this country, and observed that he was unable to meet him on that occasion owing to the pressure of important affairs requiring his presence on his eastern frontier. He was highly honoured by his visit now. "You have come," he said, "to your own country. You are all welcome. Make yourselves at home, and do as you would at home. You are free to do all that is right in my territories."

Another bit of bread was offered by way of ceremony, and the *allah akbar* with the accompanying stroke of the beard signalled the removal of the *dasturkhwan.* The file of soldiers reappeared, and noiselessly picking up the pieces disappeared with their trays; and then a repetition of the first "*salamat*," whilst Atalik folded his hands in the opposite sleeves of his *juba*, was the hint on which, rising with the envoy, we made our bows and walked out of the hall as well as our numbed and cramped legs could carry us.

We went out the way we came in, and were accompanied by the Tora to our quarters. On emerging from the sacred precincts of the palace we threw off the solemnity of its atmosphere, and with the Tora, who was inwardly proud of the impression produced by his master's august presence, breathed and talked once more with our wonted freedom and ease.

Atalik Ghazi has a very remarkable face, and one not easily described. It presents no single feature with undue prominence, and seen in a crowd would pass unnoticed as rather a common sort of face; yet it has

peculiar characters and wears an expression which somehow conveys the impression that it is more assumed than natural. The face has the general outlines of the Tatar physiognomy, with its asperities softened and rounded by Uzbak blood, and presents a broad full countenance without a wrinkle or a seam, and with less of commanding weight than of sensual passion in its expression. This may be the result of the features having acquired their natural cast under the influence of the vicissitudes and servility of his life until ten years ago as a servant of the Court of Khocand. The forehead is full and high, and without trace of a frown or wrinkle is displayed to full advantage under a well set turban, the pure white folds of which rest high on the shaven scalp; but it loses much of the force thus acquired owing to the equally full development of the cheeks, which again also detract from the size and importance of the nose. On any other face this characteristic feature would be pronounced massive and powerful, but here it is short, and smooth, and defective alike in breadth and prominence, and deprived of much of its real weight by the mouth, which and the eyes are the two most striking features of the whole countenance. The mouth is large, but not coarse; and the lips are thick and fleshy, but at the same time firmly set. Its expression is one of severity, though now and again in conversation the upper lip is curled for a moment with a very pleasing smile, instantly, however, to resume its apparently studied expression of gravity. The eyes are full and play under open brows, but they have no softness. They move slowly and stare with deliberation, and take no part in the evanescent smiles that occasionally move the lips. Their general expression is that of thought and melancholy. Altogether the set of the features appear to be

the result of studied gravity and reserve, and though naturally the countenance is well favoured its general expression is not attractive.

The same ceremony and etiquette marked each of the five visits we paid to His Highness during our stay in the country. The studied simplicity and grave solemnity, coupled with the awful silence pervading the precincts of the court, stamp the character of the strict discipline maintained by this remarkable man. There is no sign of confidence or affection anywhere. The expression of fear and self-interest is everywhere. There is no recognised system of rule. The despot's will is the law. His own people, as well as his subjects, think, and speak, and act with an ever-present conviction that any moment may plunge them into calamity; and they live a life of resignation and servility.

The man who has created, and who controls this state of society, if a tithe of what is said in mysterious whispers of his acts and his tempers be true, enjoys no confidence or affection where the bare sentiments do not exist. The loyalty he extorts is that of fear, not of goodwill, and its homage is exacted with a jealousy apparent in the most trivial matters, as we observed in many instances that came to our notice during our stay in the country.

He trusts nobody, and is in return trusted by nobody. Profound secrecy, and an imperious will, the caprice of which no man can foretell, are the principles of his rule, and, whatever may be their merit, they are not without their burthen, of which mistrust of his own creatures is not the least onerous. How far these conditions may be the growth of the peculiar circumstances of his position it is not easy to determine, but of their existence there is not a doubt, and of their novelty in the govern-

ment of the country there is no lack of evidence amongst the conquered people. The government is said to be formed on the model of that of Khocand, and the Court titles and dignities are all adopted from that principality, where, some half century ago, Muhammad Ali Khan revived the system of the Mughal emperors in the Court he then established.

Whatever the severity of the rule, however, and by whatever means it has been acquired, it is now firmly administered by a master mind, and with a success that has well nigh banished violent crime from the country. And it has besides reduced the people to a state of discipline that reflects as much upon their submissive temper as upon the majesty of Islam, in whose name the change has been effected by the potentate who now here holds the sway over a million and a half of people, the subjects for a hundred years and more preceding of the comparatively tolerant rule of the Chinese.

During the three months of our stay at Kashghar we heard of only one murder occurring in the place, and for that the culprit was publicly executed by having his throat cut in the principal bazar of the city. We never heard of robbery on the high roads during all our stay in the country. This form of crime appears only to have been practised by the wandering Kirghiz on the borders.

On returning from our visit to the Atalik we installed ourselves in the quarters prepared for us, and soon perceived the cause of our detention at Yarkand and delay at Yangi Hissar. These buildings had only been commenced on a plan forwarded by Haji Tora after his messenger, Mulla Artoc who overtook our camp in Nubra, arrived at Kashghar; and they had only been finished just as we entered them.

The buildings included two courts surrounded by rooms, and two yards for stabling and servants, all enclosed within walls of a square shape, and entered by a main gateway facing the fort. The rooms were very comfortably furnished as at Karghalik and Yarkand, and we received the most hospitable attention throughout our stay in the place.

Around our block of residency was an open space, and beyond it were the military bazar on one side, with regimental barracks (little fortified squares) scattered over the plain on the others in the direction of the city. Amongst those to the northward, and at no great distance, is a neat building surrounded by tall poplars within the enclosing walls of its court-yard. It is one of the Atalik's harems, and is said to contain a hundred and twenty fair creatures from different parts of the country. There is another inside the fort and a third at Yangi Hissar. The total number of their inmates is variously estimated at from two hundred and fifty to four hundred women, amongst whom there are, it is said, representatives of almost every people from the cities of China on the east to the markets of Constantinople on the west, and from the steppes of Mongholia on the north to the valleys of the Himalaya on the south. The modern Napoleon of the Tatar steppes, as his admirers are pleased to style him on account of his successful usurpations, may be with equal propriety styled the Solomon of the age, for if he has not the proverbial wisdom of that ancient king, he at least emulates him in the number of his wives and concubines. Of the former, Yacub Beg, as a prosperous Musalman, had provided himself with the full legal number before he left Khocand; but now the four partners of his lot as a mere Coshbegi have to share their fortunes

with four times their number of wives, whom it has pleased their lord as Atalik Ghazi to take unto himself in formal wedlock. And this without account of the concubines whom he may please to honour with his favours. The greatest promotion these last can look for is to be transferred as wives to some deserving officer whom their lord and king may thus choose to honour.

A couple of days after our arrival at Kashghar, Atalik Ghazi paid a visit to the shrine of Hazrat Afac, the patron saint of the country, and returned to his Court next day with the style and title of Amir Muhammad Yácúb Khan, *Amir ulmuminin* or "Commander of the Faithful," and issued a new coinage in the name of the reigning Sultan of Turkey. There was no parade or ceremony to celebrate the event, but the Amir, held a court, and received the congratulations of his troops on the dignity and honour conferred on him by the representative head of the Faithful.

On the 11th of December the envoy, attended by all his officers in full dress, paid a visit to the Amir, and presented the letter and presents from the Queen, and the letter and presents from Her Majesty's Viceroy of India. The envoy proceeded with all due state and ceremony, and was received by the Amir with precisely the same etiquette as on the first occasion. That is, he met him standing, and took his seat on the floor before the rest of us entered. Amongst the presents those which excited most surprise, and met with greatest favour were the sewing machines, of which the fame had spread this way from the Moscow market. They soon found their way to the harem, and were very quickly put out of order by the fair fingers there. Ihrar Khan Tora brought them back one day to be readjusted, and to take a lesson how to manipulate them, and went

off with his charge quite elated with the new gained power, to explain how simple it was to work them. But, whether he was an unskilful demonstrator, or the ladies were too hasty in their experiments, they were before long again brought back in pieces to be put together and set right; and this time accompanied by a tailor to master the mysteries of their construction and working. His instruction was apparently to some purpose, whether for good or evil I will not pretend to say. At all events we never heard of them again.

The telegraph apparatus on which some of our party had devoted much time to set in working order, and whose powers they were prepared to illustrate by transmitting messages between the envoy's residence and the Amir's court, was evidently looked upon with suspicion, and His Highness never once alluded to it, much less expressed a wish to see it in operation. The models of steam engines and steam ships fared no better, not so much from prejudice against them as inventions of the devil as from utter ignorance of their uses and powers.

On the 13th of December we visited the city as the guests of the Dadkhwah Alish Beg. He resides in an *orda* very similar in plan and surroundings to that of Yarkand, and in its audience hall entertained us to a most sumptuous *dasturkhwan* of mixed Andijan and Chinese cookery. We spent the afternoon in the garden attached to his palace. In summer it must be a very pleasant retreat, but as we saw it in the depth of winter it appeared anything but a charming resort. It had two large tanks, and on one of these on a subsequent occasion Captain Chapman with his skates showed our host how people in Europe disport themselves on the ice. His rapid and clever evolutions drew forth the admiration of the Dadkhwah and his retinue, and we more than once

heard of the Amir's intention to preside at such a display, but for some reason His Highness never carried out the purpose.

It took us an hour and twenty minutes to ride from the Yangishahr to the city gate, at the ordinary marching rate of four miles an hour. Our road took us amongst a number of small barrack enclosures, and across three or four irrigation canals, over which at different points are thrown rough rafter bridges, and then along a low water-logged beach of the Kizil Su, or "Red river," by a causeway lined with willow-trees up to the bridge over the river, which here flows between very shallow banks.

The bridge is a rough untidy structure of wood, supported on two piers built in the channel; and the road rises up to it on either side over a sloping bank of earth. Just above this bridge on the city side is the spot where Khoja Wali Khan in 1857 murdered Adolphe Schlagentweit, and added his head to the pile of skulls which he in the tyranny of his mad career erected here. He reappeared on the scene of his former atrocities, in the party which came over with the Khoja Buzurg Khan in 1864–5, and was afterwards put out of the way as a troublesome character and possible rival, when Atalik Ghazi came to power some six months later.

Beyond the bridge on the right hand a little way off the road are seen the ruins of ancient Kashghar—the Aski Shahr or Aski Sai as it is usually pronounced, "the old city"—destroyed by Mirza Ababakar, as I have before mentioned. Of the completeness of his work the remains bear witness, though in the haste of his levelling, the ramparts of the citadel were left standing on three sides. The eastern walls have been entirely washed away by a branch of the Tuman river which had been dammed up to flood the city and efface all trace of its

mud walls, and its channel now occupies the place of that side of the fort, the former area of which is now occupied by a few poor cottages and cornfields. The walls which remain are now about twenty-four feet high and twelve paces broad at the top. They are built up of hard clay and gravel, and present a look of great strength. At intervals of fifty or sixty paces are tall round moles built up of successive layers of clay and rubble which are still distinctly traceable as they were originally deposited. There are four of these moles on the west face, and they stand forward some thirty feet from the walls. They present three or four successive horizontal lines of holes, one above the other at intervals of six feet or so, which represent the sockets of the rafters which passed in so many tiers from the mole to the walls; and they probably formed covered passages from the outwork to the fort, and from their shelter gave the archers a flank fire upon assailants against the walls.

The city according to the "Tarikhi Rashidi" covered a very large extent of surface on both sides of the river Tuman, and traces of ruined walls, and mounds of *débris* are still seen scattered about on both banks below the existing ruins of the citadel. From remote times Kashghar held a proud position as one of the most important cities of eastern Turkistan, and in the time of the Mughal Khans gave its name to the territory of their hereditary kingdom. This name which fell into disuse during the century of Chinese occupation has now been revived by the present ruler, who styles himself Amir of Kashghar; and his coin bears the name of this city as the capital of his principality.

From the time of the Afrasyab kings it was noted as the capital of this territory, and a flourishing centre of trade. What the ancient pronunciation and spelling of

its name may have been does not appear, but in the form it has been handed down to us by the Arab chroniclers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it does not seem to have lost much of its original etymology, if we are right in considering Kashghar as the foreign form of the Sanskrit Kasigarh—the fort of Kasi—a name now represented in India by the Hindi form of Kashi for the city of Benares. As a transition state between the two I note that Marco Polo, according to Yule, spelled the name Cascar, and elsewhere it is spelt Casigar.

But Kashghar reached the height of its prosperity as the capital of the Uyghur kingdom under the princes of the Iylik dynasty. In the time of those kings—the tenth and eleventh centuries—the suburbs of Kashghar, it is said, extended up to the settlement of Artosh, twenty miles to the north at the point of divergence of the caravan routes, by the passes on the west to Khocand, and on the north to Almati. At that time Artosh itself was a flourishing market town, and the residence of the Baghra Khan branch of the royal family, the hereditary princes of the country, and for many centuries the rulers of Kashghar.

It was under the reign of one of those princes—Sultan Satoc Baghra Khan Ghazi—that Islam was first introduced into the country, he himself having become an early convert at the hands of Abu Nasr, one of the conquering Samani princes of Bukhara. He spent his life in wars of conversion, and after more than half a century of bloodshed and violence, reduced the towns on the line of the route from his capital to Turfán and up to Khamil to accept the new faith. On his death in 1037 he was buried under a grand mausoleum in Lower Artosh, where his tomb is now venerated as one of the most important shrines of the country. It has been very

recently restored from its state of decay by the Amir, who has renewed its ancient endowments, and built a commodious college and monastery in connection with it. The cities of Yangi Hissar, Yarkand, and Khutan, held out against the introduction of the new faith, but were finally reduced after an exterminating warfare of a quarter of a century by the sons and successors of Satoc Baghra Khan.

On the downfall of the Uyghur rule Kashghar became the capital of the Cara Khitay king, Gorkhan, and passed from him to Koshluk prince of the Nayman Kirghiz—at that time with the Cara Khitay mostly Nestorian Christians—till a few years later it was seized by the Mughals headed by Changiz. Under the Mughal rule the city flourished, and recovered its importance as a commercial centre on the restoration of the trade with China; but, during the years of anarchy succeeding the death of Chaghtay, it appears to have lost much of its importance till the restoration of the Chaghtay family, in the person of Toghluc Tymur, again raised it to pre-eminence in the country. But only for a short time, for in the reign of his son Khizr it felt the full force of Tymur's last campaign in this direction, and was reduced to a state of poverty and depopulation from which it never recovered thoroughly. Finally it was utterly destroyed and effaced from the earth by Mirza Ababakar as before mentioned.

He transported its population *en masse* to Yarkand, and, with ten thousand of its men, in seven days built the present city, on the high ground of the right bank of the Tuman, a little way higher up its course. Its enclosing walls and ditch only were completed when the invading army of Sá'id appeared on the Uch Burhan ridge on the opposite bank, above the ford at Sarman.

Ababakar in the meantime had fallen back on his

capital, fortifying and storing Yangi Hissar on his way, and his general left at Kashghar abandoned the place, without an attempt at defence, the very night of the enemy's appearance under its walls. Sá'id, finding the place a mere walled enclosure, left it behind him, and advanced upon Yangi Hissar. On his capture of Yarkand, three months later, he restored the Kashgharis to their new city, and it then assumed much the form in which we found it.

According to the "Tarikhi Rashidi" its walls enclosed an area of one hundred and fifty *jarib*, or about fifty acres. They are high and massive, and are supported at intervals by buttress bastions with turrets on top, and are protected by a deep ditch on three sides, the fourth being washed below by the river. The city has two gates; the Cúm Dabza or "Sand-Gate" on the south side, and the Sú Dabza or "Water-Gate" on the north.

Around it on the plain are populous suburbs, and some prominent shrines. Of these the most conspicuous and important are those of Sayyid Jalaluddin Baghdadi, and Hazrat Padshah. The latter is built over the head of Arslan Khan of the Baghra Khan family, whose body lies under the shrine of Ordam Padshah at the Cum Shahidan or "Martyr's Sands."

He was killed, as I shall hereafter mention, in fight against the Chinese of Khutan, and his head was cast by the victorious general against the city walls as a rebuke to the cowardice of the garrison shut up within them. Afterwards, on the repulse of the enemy, the head of the martyr prince was buried where found outside the walls, and a shrine was built on the spot. The situation of the shrine, consequently, is a guide to the former limit in this direction of the city walls, and conveys some idea of the area they enclosed.

The interior of Kashghar much resembles that of Yarkand in the character of its architecture, but the streets are narrower, and more crowded with life and activity. The city is much smaller than Yarkand, but has a brisker trade, and its shops display a richer assortment of goods. Its people too have a much more healthy and robust look, and do not suffer so much from goitre. In the centre of the city, opposite the Dadkhwah's *orda*, is a new masonry sarae built by the Amir. This and the *orda* are the only decent looking buildings we saw in the whole place. The merchants here are all Russian and Khocand traders, and in the bazars are seen many Manchu, and Khitay, and Tungani. The features of the citizens themselves are more distinctly Tatar than in Yarkand, and present a homogeneous type, unmixed with the Aryan forms of the Badakhshi, Wakhi, Kashmiri, and Panjabi, which are found in the southern city.

We returned from our visit to the Dadkhwah highly pleased with his hospitality, and subsequently made several excursions to the city, with a confirmation of the favourable impression made on the first occasion. Its streets and bazars always presented a scene of life and activity on week-days as well as market-days. This is probably due to the garrison located outside for whose convenience omnibus carts ply daily between the city and the fort gates.

On the 18th December we witnessed a review of the Khitay or "Chinese troops" in the service of the Amir, on the wide parade-ground some way to the north of our Residency. It lies along the right bank of the Kizil Su, and is covered with target butts in all directions, the practice at which during our stay was constant.

There were twenty-eight companies of fifty men each on the ground; and they were divided into two

brigades of Tungani and Yangi Musalmans, both under the command of the Kho Dalay of the latter, to whom the Mah Dalay of the former acted as a second in command. The men differed little in dress, and not at all in features or language, and wore loose cotton robes, and a handkerchief tied round the head with two ends flapping over the ears. They manœuvred systematically by signs made with little flags which were waved by fuglemen in attendance on the Kho Dalay, who with the Mah Dalay occupied a position in the centre of the field, where the band took its stand.

Each company carried two standards of a triangular shape, and of two bright colours—red and white, or yellow and blue, or green and white, &c.—and the men were in sections of five, the complement required for the service of the tyfu, which was the only weapon they carried. This was a heavy wall piece, and not unlike a duck gun. It was carried on the shoulders of two men, and fired by the rear man, the barrel being rested on the shoulder of the front man, who knelt for the purpose; whilst the other three in turn sponged, loaded, and primed the pan.

The evolutions consisted of marching and counter marching, forming column and line, and volley firing in the last formation. The skirmishing was done by a different set of men, who were clad in a peculiar uniform. One company of these wore Grecian helmets, and carried bows and arrows. They discharged these last at the imaginary enemy, and then retreated behind the line, which now fired a volley into them. As the smoke cleared away a company of pikemen came forward, and piked the fallen enemy as they were supposed to lie on the ground. Then the whole line retreated covered by a company of shield men dressed in yellow clothes—jacket, trowsers, and cap all in one piece—with bars of black, and caps

with ears to represent tigers. The buckler of their shield was a gun barrel, and they loaded and fired it very dexterously in the midst of their performances. Their duty was to retard the cavalry by dispersing their charges. This they did by cutting antics and capers, and by flourishing their big shields (which were brightly painted with dragon's heads) and shouting, and then suddenly turning somersaults, or rolling on the ground and firing their gun-barrels as they did so, or dropping torpedoes with slow matches which exploded all over the field. And finally, as they retired, they stopped here and there to sabre with their swords some fallen trooper. On the conclusion of manœuvres such as these the troops formed column, and marched past the Kho Dalay and his staff, whilst the band played some military music. Their instruments were drums and flageolets and cymbals; and the big drum was carried on a frame of wood by two men. They then marched off the ground to their respective quarters—the Yangi Musalmans to their own fort on the river bank, and the Tunganis to their barracks near the city.

We were after this invited to a Chinese breakfast which the Kho Dalay had prepared for us in a tent pitched on the field, and divided our attention between the good things set before us and the athletic exercises performed by the band boys and tigers, who were summoned to the front for our entertainment. They displayed a great deal of skill and dexterity in single stick, cudgelling, sword-swinging, and tumbling and kicking, and ended with a theatrical scene in which their shields were held in the form of a castle. This was assaulted by a party of the others, and a stiff body carried head and heels over its walls with a very clever run was the finale. The Kho Dalay's entertainment now claimed our undivided

attention, and bewildered us with the variety of meats crowded together, and succeeding one the other in rapid succession. The breakfast was laid on a low table round which were set stools, and it covered every inch of its surface with the most opposite sorts of dishes, amongst which there was barely room for the little saucer plates from which we were to eat. These were placed round the sides, each with its soup-spoon of china, its chopsticks, and its napkin of paper. This last was neatly folded in a sort of book cover inscribed with a motto in Chinese characters, and said to mean "Good appetite. Good digestion" on one side, and stuck with a toothpick on the other.

There were toasted almonds and walnuts and pistacios, with mince pies, jam tarts, preserved fruits, syrups and pickles to begin with. Then came rich soups, and stewed meats, and pilao, and then roast goose, and roast joints, with vegetables cooked simply, and in the thick sauce of the yam or sweet potato. There were different sorts of bread and pastry, and the *yil kazan*, a sort of "*pot-au-feu*" in the shape of a tea urn with a broad cover. In the central cylinder were live embers kept glowing by the vent holes below—the arrangement which gives the utensil its name,—and in the space around it was a perfect salmagundi of all sorts of meats, and vegetables, and pastes stewed together in very tasty melange.

It seemed as if our host was determined to give us at a single coup the full battery of his national *cuisine* in all its wide range, and he certainly succeeded in convincing us of the superior skill of his *chef*. There was not a single dish of the many which had not its special merit and excellence.

There are altogether about three thousand of the old Khitay and Tungani troops now here in the service

of the Amir. The latter number about a third of the whole, and are mostly employed in the garrisons of the city, and frontier posts of Chacmac in company with Andijan troops. The latter, though all Yangi Musalmans nominally, are not trusted, and are only employed to furnish sentries at the Yangishahr, and different barracks.

They are the sole relics of the Chinese army which held the country, and have survived the massacres and sieges of the revolution to live out their lives under the favour accorded them by the Amir. Their history is a strange exception to the course of events which succeeded each other with such uniform repetition in all the other states of the territory. The Amban, with the Kho Dalay, and other Chinese officers, civil and military, and eight thousand Khitay, of whom one-half were soldiers, shut himself up in the *mangshin*, or Yangishahr—or, as it is usually called by the Tatars, Yangicorghan (New Fort) —as soon as he heard of the outbreak of the revolution at Yarkand in the spring of 1863. In it he held out against the repeated assaults of the Kirghiz under Sadic Beg, and of the Andijanis under Coshbegi Yacub Beg (now the Amir) until, the pressure of famine leading to treachery in the garrison, he blew up his palace, and with his family and officers perished in its ruins after having bravely held out against all odds for full two years.

The *mangshin* was one of that series of forts which the Chinese built outside the cities of Kashghar, Yangi Hissar, Yarkand, and Khutan, to separate their troops from the citizens, after the Khoja revolt under Jahangir in 1826, and during which their former forts, called Gulbagh, had been destroyed. They were strongly built, and protected by a deep ditch, and were always kept provisioned; for they were in each place the residence

of the Amban, and Chinese officers with their families, and troops.

Here at Kashghar, the besieged garrison had from time to time opportunities of foraging the suburbs, and getting in supplies during the contest for the possession of the city between Sadic Beg and Cutlugh Beg who was the Wang, or Musalman governor appointed by the Chinese.

When Khoja Buzurg Khan arrived with his small party under command of Coshbegi Yacub Beg, the city was made over to him by the Wang, but the Amban held out in his fort. The rivalry that now broke out between the Kirghiz chief and the Andijani leader prevented a proper siege of the fort at that time; and then other claimants for the possession of Kashghar appearing in the field on the part of the king Rashuddin, who was established at Acsu, a further delay occurred. For the Andijanis were now involved in other operations which carried them down to Yarkand, after they had defeated the Acsu army at Khan Aric.

Their attempt to secure Yarkand failed, and then the Coshbegi fell back to press the siege of Yangi Hissar, where a garrison of two thousand Khitay still maintained themselves in the *mangshin*. The place was taken after forty days by mining and assault, and most of the garrison perished in its defence, or were put to the sword in its sack after capture. The women and children were made captives of war, and about two hundred men saved their lives by accepting Islam.

A messenger was sent off by Yacub Beg to report this victory to Alim Culi, who was at the time engaged against the Russians at Tashkand, and amongst the presents he carried were nine Khitay virgins for the Capchac chief. On arrival at Khocand, however, the messenger heard of Alim Culi's death, and the capture

of Tashkand by their enemy, and his fair captives with others, and the presents were seized by Mirza Ahmad and Beg Muhammad, who at this juncture combined to try and secure the government of Khocand for themselves.

Meanwhile Yacub Beg, with a force greatly increased by adventurers from Badakhshan and Khocand, and favoured by the aid of a truce with Sadic, set to press closely the siege of the Kashghar Fort, which had hitherto been very lax. And he took it in the autumn of 1865, with the connivance of the Kho Dalay who commanded the Khitay troops forming its garrison. He had arranged, through the mediation of his Musalman secretary and interpreter, to deliver up the fort and accept Islam on promise of being spared his life, and being allowed to take his family and adherents with him. On the conclusion of his plans, he informed the Amban of the course he had adopted, and advised his acquiescence to the surrender.

But the Amban, horrified at the proposal, and hopeless of escape, immediately set fire to his palace, and perished in its flames amidst the explosion of the powder already stored in it. Yacub Beg, on finding how matters went, called out his troops to take possession of the place, and sent messengers to protect the Kho Dalay. He and his family, with some three thousand Khitay troops and women, were taken under protection; and then the Andijan soldiers, rushing in, put the rest to the sword, and for seven days plundered the houses.

Yacub Beg now restored order, had a mosque built on the site of the Budhist temple, and his *orda* on that of the Amban's palace; and before the completion of the latter installed himself in it, and signalised his assumption of independent authority by a round of festivities, in the course of which he married the daughter of the Kho

Dalay, who, with his men, was apportioned a residence in a small enclosed barrack in an isolated position on the other side of the Kizil river. He here kept them as a sort of trump card during his rebellion against his master the Khoja, and when, subsequently, he seized and made prisoner of Buzurg Khan, and assumed the government for himself, he kept faith with the Khitay, and enrolled them as troops in his army.

The Kho Dalay was restored to his former position over them, and entrusted with their entire control, with power of inflicting death upon such as merited it. Musalman priests were quartered amongst them to teach them the formulæ of the new creed, but in other respects they were left to their own customs, so far, at least, as they were in accord with the requirements of Islam.

Amidst the violence, and cruelties perpetrated in the name of Islam against these people in all parts of the country, this exceptional instance is a testimony greatly to the credit of the Amir. For though they are not trusted, and are more than suspected of keeping up their Budhist rites in the secrecy of their dwellings, the forlorn situation of these Khitay converts is taken into account, and they are generally treated with consideration, so far as the nature of their case admits.

After the review of these troops, we witnessed the practice of a battery of artillery, commanded by a native of the Panjab who had been serving different masters in Central Asia since the time of the Sikhs, when he first left his own country. The gunners were mostly Afghans and Panjabis, and seemed a handy though rough set of men. The horses that drew the carriages appeared the most commendable part of the equipment.

We saw no infantry troops in the country, nor any regularly drilled or equipped regiments. In fact the

troops all ride, and in the battle field dismount to fight. And in their fighting, or marching costume they are droll objects to the unaccustomed eye. All their loose flowing robes are tucked into the capacious overalls which are fastened about the waist tightly, and give the wearer the appearance of a bolster tied in the middle, and toddling about on two short stumps. However unsoldierly the appearance of the men, the dress is not without its merits in the country. It keeps the body warm, and admits of the riders tumbling off from, and into their saddles with surprising agility.

CHAPTER X.

On Christmas eve the Amir sent each of us a lambskin *juba* covered with Khocand silk. No two were alike in the bold patterns of their designs, and, enveloped in their comfortable folds, we might easily have passed muster as part of his own body guard, if we could but sit on our heels without moving, and look solemn without speaking by the hour together.

On new year's eve he sent over similar warm clothing, only covered with linsey instead of silk, for each of our followers. The mark of his good-will was very gratifying and well-timed, for the thermometer had for some days been in the habit of sinking several degrees below zero, and giving a day maximum of only three or four degrees below the freezing point.

On Christmas day we went to see some target practice with the *tyfu* by the Khitay, and some artillery practice by the battery we saw a few days ago. The former made some very fair shooting at two hundred and fifty yards range. On its conclusion our Guides' escort displayed the power of their Sniders, and astonished the people with their tent-pegging and sword-cutting. Hardly a spear went by without carrying off its peg, whilst the succession of turnips which fell to their swords elicited a hum of approbation from the crowd. The crowd of spectators seemed puzzled which to admire most—the soldierly set-up of the men, and their splendid horses, or the skill and dexterity of their exercises. On

our return to the Residency, we found its court occupied by quite a menagerie of wild animals and tame, which had been sent as a present to the envoy by Alish Beg Dadkhwah. There were two fighting rams ready to knock anybody off his legs, or the senses from each other's heads, and there was a huge stag (*marál*) stalking about the yard with two men holding the ropes that stretched on either side his antlers. There were four timid gazelles pacing round and round the court in search of a way of escape, and there was a fox squeezing himself against the wall for a hiding, and there was a snow pheasant apparently quite at home on the scene.

The Amir had before this sent us presents of game and fruits, and amongst the former pheasants, and hares, and wild duck, and partridges very like the several European species. And subsequently we received many camel loads of ovis Poli and ibex, brought in at intervals from the hills to the north and west. They usually arrived frozen stiff in the positions they had assumed during the journey, or when loaded. They were magnificent specimens, and we preserved their skins and horns and brought them back with us to India.

On the 30th December we made an excursion to the shrine of Hazrat Afac, which is situated two or three miles to the north of the city. The road beyond the bridge over the Tuman river passes along the side of a vast cemetery which is kept in very good order, and is inhabited by a colony of filthy beggars—veritable dwellers amongst the dead—who claim their blackmail from the passers by in no uncertain tone. It then enters the gardens and fields attached to the shrine, which is the most important in the country, being the resting-place of its patron saint, Khoja Hidayatallah, who is better known by his priestly title of Hazrat

Afac, "The Most High Presence," and, in the history of the country, is conspicuous as the founder of the Khoja rule such as it was.

The mausoleum, with its attached monastery, was restored and greatly enlarged by himself over the grave of his father, which had been destroyed and burnt by the Calmac invaders; and, on its completion, he was invited by his son, who, as governor of Kashghar, was charged with its construction, to come and bless the opening ceremony. The aged saint, however, sustaining his miraculous character to the last, sent a reply that he was coming immediately to lay his bones there; and within twenty-four hours, it is said, his body was carried from Yarkand to Kashghar for burial, attended by 10,000 of his family, and domestics, and retainers. He died in the retreat of his palace in the beginning of last century whilst in the act of theological conversation with some of his disciples. On his death broke out that family dissension which, in a few years, led to the destruction of their ill-acquired, and worse maintained government, and the final dispersion and expulsion from the country of the whole fraternity of these shameless impostors, and vile libertines.

But so great was the influence the Khojas had acquired over the minds of the people that, during the two centuries of the Calmac and Khitay (both Budhists) rule, their intrigues and their rebellions kept the territory in a more or less constant state of disaffection and turmoil. And finally, on the overthrow of the Chinese authority—from a cause independent of the Khoja intrigues which had so repeatedly before involved them in costly measures for their repression—it was a lineal descendant of this saint who emerged from his retreat in Khocand to recover the patrimony of his ancestors; a possession which

neither he, nor his successors, ever enjoyed otherwise than as governors subordinate to the foreign rulers.

Of the lull which at this period—immediately preceding the Tungani revolt—came over the previous activity of the expatriated Khojas in Khocand, we are reminded by the fact that, a year and a half elapsed between the outbreak of the Tungani rebellion, and the appearance of the Khoja Buzurg Khan as claimant of the government by right of heritage; and then only on the invitation of the unsuccessful Kirghiz pretender, Sadic Beg. Of the causes which produced this tardy action on the part of the Khojas—I mean the heirs of the former governing family, and not the priests of Acsu who enjoyed the same proud title, and in the tide of the Tungani revolt rose to the surface for a time as controllers of the affairs of the country about their own home—the decline of their influence after the establishment of the Russians on the northern side of the Tianshan affords sufficient explanation, coupled with the memory of the tyranny perpetrated during the last Khoja invasion under Wali Khan. But what mainly operated in checking their ardour against Kashghar on this occasion was the attitude at that time assumed by Russia towards Khocand, and the fact of the annexation of its northern parts being actually in course of progress by her troops.

These events so engrossed the attention of the Andijanis in the defence of their own homes, that the Khojas and their affairs were uncared for; and when Buzurg Khan got permission from Alim Culi to quit his army assembled for the defence of Tashkand, to try his chance in recovering Kashghar, he could raise no more than sixty-six men to link their fortunes with his, although he had Coshbegi Yacub Beg given to him as a general by Alim Culi.

On his arrival at Kashghar the city was immediately surrendered to the Khoja. He installed himself in the *orda* as king, and making over the control of affairs to his general, devoted himself to the pursuit of pleasures which soon deprived him alike of the respect of his followers, and of the people who had surrendered the country to him. He was deposed by his own general, and, after being kept prisoner for several months, was finally sent out of the country to go to Mekka, but instead of doing so he took his way back to Khocand. Of the other Khojas of his family who on this occasion came over from Khocand, Eshan Khan, Wali Khan, Kichik Khan, and another died during the military operations that established Yacub Beg in the possession of the country.

After he had deposed Buzurg, and assumed the title of Atalik Ghazi, or "Patron crescentader," the Amir, as part of the scheme for reviving the decayed Islam of the country, restored all the shrines and monasteries which had fallen into neglect and decay under the Chinese rule. And amongst the first to be so rebuilt and enlarged were those of Hazrat Afac, Bibi Miryam, and Sultan Satoc in the suburbs of Kashghar.

At each of these spots he built a new mosque, and college, and almshouse, and, renewing their original endowments granted other rent-free lands for their support. These establishments are all very neatly and substantially built of bricks and mortar, and are with the new saraes for merchants, the only really durable structures we saw in the country. There are, it is said, nearly sixty of these religious establishments which have been built and repaired by the Amir.

The college, mosque, and almshouses attached to the shrine of Hazrat Afac are, taken all together, a very ex-

tensive range of buildings for this country, and shelter a population of about three hundred souls. The instruction imparted in them is entirely of a religious nature, and conducted by a numerous staff of priests.

The shrine itself stands in the centre of a court which is entered under a lofty archway covered with Arabic inscriptions on glazed tiles of blue and white, and is contained inside an oblong building which was not opened to us. Its walls also are coated with glazed tiles; and its roof is flat and shows a small forest of poles, topped with brass pointers below which are fixed yak tails. All along the coping above, and on the ledge near the floor below are ranged horns of the ibex, stag, wild sheep, and gazelle; and some of them are of extraordinary size. A stag's horn of grand proportions elicited the admiration of the envoy, and was sent to him as a present by the superior of the establishment, *Mutawalli Bashi*, Sultan Mahmúd Eshan.

He received us on arrival at the gateway through which we entered the grounds of the establishment, and, after conducting us over it, entertained us at a frugal *dasturkhwan* spread in a tent which had been erected for us on a small platform of earth that stood near a frozen tank around which grew some very fine silver poplars. There was a grove of these trees in the court of the shrine, and some extensive fruit-gardens and vineyards surrounded the group of buildings, and conveyed the idea of a very agreeable retreat in summer.

Our host, the Superior, had lived in Constantinople many years, and had visited Jerusalem and Mecca. He treated us with extreme deference, and told us that, by favour of Badaulat (the Amir), we were the first Christians who had ever set foot within the sacred precincts. The little gold pieces of conciliation which we dispensed

amongst the darvash and priests at the different places we came in contact with them bore excellent fruit, and we found free access to all the most sacred shrines in the vicinity, and as the king's guests were everywhere received with respect, and the *dasturkhwan* of welcome. This freedom from prejudice—if the conduct was not in obedience, as an exceptional case, to the Amir's commands—is more than we could have hoped for, and is more than we find in other Muhammadan states, or even in our own India.

The Hazrat Afac, by a visit to whose shrine we have been so highly favoured, is described by a cotemporary author and disciple, a resident of Yarkand, as a prophet second only to Muhammad, and as a miracle worker equal to Jesus. His fame was spread over the land from the borders of Russia to those of China, and from the Steppes of Tatary to the plains of Hindustan. And his disciples from all these quarters paid him tribute as a free-will offering.

Nearer home, however, they appear to have lacked in such one-minded faith, and we read of scoffers and railers who charged him with hypocrisy, and taunted him with robbing his dupes to keep his concubines in silks and brocades, and his palace youths in gilded crowns and jewelled cinctures; and of others who denied his miracles because he did not cure them of their maladies, and did not banish evil from the country.

The author, Khaliduddin, from whose work I have taken these particulars, and who was after the death of the saint attached to the monastery in connection with his tomb, was not amongst these unbelievers, and, in support of the veracity of his great teacher's character, relates how swiftly the scoffers were overtaken by the just punishment of their infidelity. One of these, a

powerful noble of Yarkand, was choked to death at the *dasturkhwan* of him whom, on the way to partake of his hospitality, he had wantonly traduced. His brother and friends immediately falling at the feet of their host offered all their possessions and wealth, and implored him to resuscitate the defunct sinner. The saint with a benign glance bade his neighbour strike him on the throat, and with the blow out came the dislodged bone, and the dead man returned to life. Through shame he retired to privacy at Acsu for some years, and then reappeared at court as a staunch supporter of the saint's son and successor.

Such is a fair sample of the hundreds of miracles attributed to this remarkable character, whose influence upon the minds of the people was something extraordinary. When he appeared amongst them in public his glance seemed to mesmerise them. His disciples, issuing from their houses on his approach, prostrated themselves on the ground in his way, and gathered up the dust from under his feet as some precious treasure. Wayfarers stood still entranced; and of the multitude, some hailed him with shouts of delight, and others with tears of joy. Some were excited into dancing wildly, and others fell senseless in a swoon; whilst all were pervaded with an ineffable sense of pleasure and security. Amongst men he everywhere inspired a feeling of reverential awe, and amongst women he exercised a mysterious influence which penetrated to the privacy of the most noble families.

Yet, with all these powers assigned to him, the country was distracted by sedition and tumult during the whole of his long career in it as governor of the territory from Andijan to Turfan, and from Artosh to Khutan. And after his death it was torn by the wars between his own

sons, and between the sons of the hereditary rulers whom he had deprived of their just rights, until the Chinese annexed the territory, and restored order amongst its turbulent elements.

And now with the revival of Islam here, the fame of this modern saint is raised from the oblivion into which it was sinking to be perpetuated afresh, for the benefit of the rising generation, amongst the glorious deeds of the army of martyrs who in bygone centuries shed their blood here in testimony of the faith they propagated.

On the last day of the year 1873, Col. Gordon, accompanied by Capt. Trotter and Dr Stoliczka, set out on an excursion to Chacmac, and Capt. Biddulph at the same time went off in the direction of Maralbashi. The former party returned on the 11th, having experienced a temperature of 26° F. below zero; and the latter on the 23d January 1874, without having fallen in with the tigers said to be found there, and of which animals the skins sold in the city had raised hopes of a successful bag. Meanwhile, on the 8th January, the envoy, accompanied by Capt. Chapman and myself, spent the afternoon, and dined with our friend Haji Tora at his residence at Pakhtaghlik. It is a neat garden-house, situated on the plain about a mile or two to the northwest of the fort, and was the residence built for the Amir whilst he was engaged in the siege of the Yangishahr which he now occupies.

The dinner was served entirely in the European fashion, which our host said he hoped to be able to introduce amongst his countrymen. There were none of them present, however, to meet us and see how the spoons, and knives, and forks, and glasses were used, or to admire the white table-cloth and napkins; nor yet to taste of the rich and savoury dishes prepared by his

Constantinople cook. Our host did the honours of his table alone, and by his pleasant and profitable conversation, in the absence of other interest, produced a feeling of satisfaction that we had him all to ourselves.

On the table were set joints of roast beef and mutton in dishes of China ware, and they were supported on each side by decanters of what looked like milk and water, but what was *cumis*. This is a fermented liquor prepared from mares' milk, and has an agreeably acid taste. It is only found amongst the Kirghiz, with whom it is an every-day drink, and is considered very wholesome and invigorating—qualities for which it is held in high estimation by the luxurious and enervated inhabitants of the cities. The Amir is very partial to it, and his *harem* is daily supplied with it by his Kirghiz subjects. This is the only supply that comes to the town, and his highness now and then distributes it amongst those whom he may please to favour. And it was to his forethought that we were indebted for our acquaintance with its properties on this occasion.

A couple of Turkish servants glided noiselessly backwards and forwards with eight successive courses, and then set the now familiar *ash* and *yil cazan* of the *dasturkhwan* upon the table. These in turn made way for the cheese and fruits of the dessert, including some of the first brought from the Turkish capital.

On the 27th January a single gun fired at sunset, on the parade in front of the fort, announced the commencement of the *Idi Curban*, or "Festival of (Abraham's) Sacrifice," and another gun the next morning announced the prayers which the Amir, attended by his Court, proceeded on foot to perform in the mosque on one side of the parade ground. We witnessed the procession from the roof of our Residency, which stood on the opposite

side of the parade, and observed the simplicity of dress, and quiet demeanour which characterised the ceremony. There were not so many people as one might have expected in the procession, and there was no crowd of spectators at all; on the contrary, the ground was deserted except by a few soldiers and servants of the palace. The next day the envoy, attended by his officers, visited the Amir for the customary congratulations, and out of compliment we all appeared in the Andijan furs his highness had very considerately presented to us. The ceremony was conducted precisely as on previous occasions, and with the same effects. It was refreshing to get out into the open air, hear the hum of voices, and resume our wonted gaiety, in place of the gravity assumed for the occasion in accordance with the etiquette of the Atalik's Court.

On the 7th February we spent the afternoon and dined with Ihrar Khan Tora, at his residence inside the fort. As in the other case, so in this, our host had to bear the burthen of our entertainment single-handed. In the absence of other aid, the *dasturkhwan* and successive services of tea were opportune resorts to eke out the long hours till dinner was announced. The entertainment was in the Chinese fashion, and presented a novelty which immediately engrossed our interest. The table was set and served by a number of Khitay servants—the Yangi Musalmans, as our host proudly styled them—and did ample credit to their taste and skill. The centre of the table was occupied in its length by a row of china vases full of artificial flowers evidently from Europe, and in alternation with them were set plates on which were piled bits of melon and apple cut and coloured in representation of roses, and tulips, and so forth.

On each side of these were ranged handsome china

saucers full of candied fruits, toasted almonds, walnuts crusted with a paste of sugar, slices of melon sunk in syrup, &c., and pickles of sorts, with salads of young lentil sprouts. Each plate had its china ladle, chopsticks, and paper napkin as before described, and the only thing wanting was the tumbler or drinking bowl of some kind. This, to us necessary adjunct, was never seen, either at the ordinary *dasturkhwan* or at the set dinners. It seems that it is not the custom of the people to drink whilst they eat; but we observed that a draught of water is taken at the conclusion of the meal to wash all down.

In return for their hospitality, the envoy invited Ihrar Khan Tora, and Alish Beg Dadkhwah to an entertainment at the Embassy mess, at which our friend Haji Tora had on previous occasions honoured us with his company, though it was not his lot to do so on this. To meet all tastes our messman, with the aid of Kho Dalay's *chéf* and Haji Tora's Constantinople cook, laid on the table a composite dinner of English, Chinese and Turkish dishes, carefully excluding from the feast such items as are known to be proscribed by the *Shara'*; so that our guests were able to dine free from misgiving as to the risk of their unwittingly partaking of forbidden things. The Tora had acquired the use of knife and fork during his visit to India, and acquitted himself very fairly with them on this occasion, but the Dadkhwah was as awkward with them as a growing infant, and finally, after very good-natured perseverance, laid them aside for the more natural use of his fingers. The Tora, not so free in thought and action as his pilgrim peer in rank, on finding that our own goblets were charged with wine, took occasion in the presence of his companion guest to express a pious

horror of the forbidden liquor, and begged that a cup of tea might be set in place of the silver-plated vessel which stood at the side of his plate. His example was not unheeded by the Dadkhwah, who, after a curious examination of the gilded interior and polished exterior of the goblet placed for his use, quietly set it down and asked for a bowl of water. The contents of some to them very mysterious tin cases provoked serious misgivings on the score of their lawfulness as food, so giving their law the benefit of their doubts the pious Muslims denied themselves the flavour of *paté de foie gras* and "preserved woodcock" to keep themselves undefiled from meat killed contrary to canon.

Our guests, however, despite their punctilious Islamism, found abundance of familiar and accustomed dishes to invite their attention, and on the conclusion of the entertainment went away highly pleased, and fully impressed with the nature of the recreation we had prepared for them as a sample of the English form of social meeting. The model steam-engine, and the galvanic battery, the air-pump, zootrope, gyroscope, and other scientific toys which were set in action and explained for their amusement during the afternoon; the sounds of the bagpipe which astonished their ears without entirely distracting their attention from the array of meats set before them at dinner; and the wonders of the magic-lantern which afterwards elicited their unqualified approbation;—all these and other similar modes of diversion stocked their minds with a fund of matter for reflection, and repetition as marvels beyond their ken, as the mysterious agents of the Briton's power.

On the 14th February the envoy, leaving Col. Gordon and Capt. Biddulph in the Residency, set out with the rest of his officers on an excursion to Artosh, and the

valleys at the foot of the Tianshan or Alatagh, and returned after an interesting little tour on the 27th of the month.

Our road took us through the ditched and fortified cantonment bazar on the east of the Residency to the Kizil Su, and which we forded stirrup-deep over a pebbly bed a little way above a rough log-bridge. We then turned N.W. to N., and passing along the cultivation of Arawat and Besh Kirim on our left, at about ten miles out, alighted at the shrine of Bibi Miryam or "Lady Mary" for the inevitable *dasturkhwan.*

This is a shrine over the grave of Alanor (Eleanor ?) Turkan the youngest of the three daughters of the king whose mausoleum we are going to see at Altun or "Lower" Artosh. Her elder sisters, Nasab Turkan and Hadya Turkan, were married to influential divines of the Sayyid family who were settled at Tashkand and Samarcand, and there left families whose sons in their day occupied prominent positions in the affairs of that country.

She herself was never married, and her history is one of the most remarkable amongst the many marvellous traditions of the martyr saints whose relics do here abound in such multitude. As given in the *Tazkira Baghra Khan* (which is not, as the name implies, only a history of the Baghra Khan family, but an account of the most noted of the martyr saints of the country he ruled, translated into Turki from the original Persian of Najumddin Attar, a cotemporary priest of the eleventh century) it is much to this effect:—

"The history of Alanor resembles that of Hazrat Miryam the mother of Jesus. She was distinguished alike for her beauty and talents as for her piety and virtues. When she had attained to the fresh bloom of maturity she was one night engaged in the seclusion of

her chamber with the performance of her wonted religious exercises, and the angel Gabriel appearing before her poured a drop of light into her mouth. It pervaded her whole body with a sense of ecstacy which made her faint. On recovering her senses she completed her devotions, and for some months continued to perform the usual prayers with the prescribed regularity.

"At length one night she went out to the gate of her dwelling, and was terrified into a swoon by the appearance of a tiger standing before it. Finally, after some months and days, on Friday the 10th *Muharram* (the year is not given) when the king and his Court were at prayers in the mosque, Alanor gave birth to a son—an infant with ruddy complexion, gazelle eyes, and angelic voice.

"On hearing of this the people both great and small were amazed, and exclaimed 'What manner of event is this?' But the king was mighty wrathful, and ordered an assembly of his nobles and grandees, of his doctors and divines, to investigate the conduct and pronounce on the character of his daughter, the princess Alanor.

"She was fully questioned by her judges, and with a detail of all the particulars explained the mystery to their satisfaction. She was pronounced a chaste lady, and favoured servant of the Prophet; and the priests, considering the apparition of the tiger as a token of future fame, named the boy Sayyid 'Ali Arslan (or 'The Lord Exalted Tiger'). He was brought up under his mother's care, and at the age of five years was sent to school. After six months tuition he mastered all science, apparent and occult, and at seven years of age was betrothed to his cousin Toc Bubu, who subsequently bore him three sons and several daughters. The sons all grew up to be men of note; and one of the daughters

married Sultan Iylik, the king of Uzkand, and another Sayyid Jalaluddin Shami."

The book from which I have taken the above particulars further on gives the following account of the death of Alanor. When her son was slain in fight against the Chinese of Khutan at the Cúm Shahidan and the victors, besieging Kashghar threw his head against the walls, she was so incensed with grief that she determined to avenge his blood with her own hands. "Attended by her maidens (Amazons for the nonce), she issued from the seclusion of her palace at Artosh, and heaving cold sighs of anguish entered the field of battle against her foe. She sent twenty-five of their infidel souls to hell, and then, overcome by their superior numbers, was put to flight with her attendants. The ground in their course miraculously opened, and received the fugitives in the shelter of its caverns. Their pursuers following close discovered their retreat and slew them all in their hiding."

The shrine stands on the bank of a deep ravine, and probably indicates the spot on which this fated party met their death. It is called Mazar Bibi Miryam, or "Shrine of Lady Mary," after the title by which she was generally known in connection with the event of her notoriety, and is surrounded by a number of more humble graves within the low walls which enclose the sacred area.

The legend attached to her name resembles that of Alan Coa (the mother of Buzunjar Khan, the great ancestor of the Mughal, and conqueror of the Turk in Turan), as given in the Rauzat Assafa of Mir Khawind Shah. Her case is compared to that of the mother of Hazrat Isa or "Lord Jesus," and to that of the "women of the northern isles who conceived by bathing in certain

fertilising springs." But the medium in her case was a ray of light entering through the opening in the top of the *Khargah*, or tent, and passing into her mouth as she lay asleep at night. She was a noted beauty, and was, as a matter of course in such a case, accused of unchastity. She proved her innocence, however, before a convocation of all the Mughal nobles and chiefs by showing to a select committee of them, appointed to investigate the matter, the light as it again poured into her tent at night.

The existence of these legends in this region at the present day is a remarkably interesting circumstance. Whether they are to be viewed as outgrowths of the Christianity which formerly flourished here, or merely as grafts from the Islam which took its place, or whether their origin is from some other native source, anterior to both, I will not pretend to consider; though I may state that, as they are the records we find in the Muhammadan histories of the region, they probably owe their origin to the priesthood of Islam.

During the Chinese rule the shrine of Bibi Miryam was neglected, and fell to decay; but on the establishment of the Amir's rule, it has, with scores of others, been restored from its ruins, and is now raised to the first rank amongst the religious institutions of the country by the construction in connection with it of a mosque, and college, and quarters for four *Cari* or "Reciters of the Curan." Attached to the mosque also is a set of quarters for the accommodation of the Amir when he visits the shrine.

By the good favour of His Highness these quarters were placed at our disposal, and had been prepared for our accommodation during the proposed stay here for the night; but, as the day was yet early, we decided to

go on to Artosh the same afternoon. All these buildings were completed only eighteen months ago, and stand on their own ground, which is enclosed by walls, and entered through gates on two sides thereof.

We were met here by Musa Khoja, a young son of Mahmud Khan the lord of Artosh, and he did the honours of the *dasturkhwan* with unfeigned affability and goodwill. There was a tank here under some poplar trees in front of the mosque, and seeing some men at work on it with hatchets I went to see what they were about, and found they were carrying away the ice in baskets to store for summer use. Its thickness on the tank was twenty-two inches. From the shrine our road went north across a deep ravine on to a bare, wind-swept waste, the surface of which was covered with little gravelly knolls. These presented an abrupt bank to the windward or north, and tailed away in slopes in the opposite direction. Beyond them we crossed another ravine, and then passing over a saline waste rose up to the crest of a range of gravel ridges which separate Artosh from Kashghar. It is called Cúm Alatagh, and extends for some fifteen miles from N.W. to S.E., and is perfectly bare of vegetation. We crossed it near its eastern end, and fording the two branches of the Artosh riv , and passing amongst the homesteads beyond, at about ten miles from the shrine, reached the residence of our host at Mashhad.

Mahmud Khan received the envoy at the inner gate of his mansion, where was drawn up a guard of forty soldiers whose equipments was uniform only in their white turbans and prong-rest guns, and conducting him to his large reception hall welcomed us to his home. It was noon when we left Kashghar, and it was fast getting dark when we arrived here. By some

mistake, our baggage had gone to Ostun Artosh or "Upper Artosh," and did not arrive till next morning. Our host, however, made us comfortable with bedding for the night, and, after the evening *dasturkhwan*, and the usual rubber at whist in the light of candles placed on the floor, we fed the fire for the night, and, Tatar fashion, stretched ourselves to sleep on the carpets all over the room.

Mahmud Khan traces his descent from the Sultan Satoc Bughra Khan whose mausoleum stands close outside his dwelling, and gives the little township its name of Mashhad—"The place of martyrdom." His family have been lords of Artosh for seven centuries, and he is now their humble representative. His fortune was broken by the Chinese after they suppressed the revolt in 1857 headed by Wali Khan. His father and two brothers were captured and executed very barbarously by the Chinese, in retaliation for the excesses they had committed during the revolt, which they were the first to join—the father having given his daughter, our host's sister, in marriage to the rebel Khoja.

Mahmud Khan, with others of the family, escaped a like fate by flight to Tashkand, whence they finally returned in the party with Buzurg Khan. He has been restored by the Amir to his ancient patrimony, much curtailed, however, of its former extent, in return for his services in the conquest of the country; and he is now retained in the service of the Amir as leader of 400 horsemen whom he maintains on his own estate. He is a middle-aged man, and has strongly marked Tatar features of the pure Uyghur stamp, with a fair ruddy complexion very slightly tinged yellow. His manners are very quiet and unassuming, but his features are cast in an austere mould the impression

of which was not removed by civilities to us. He has three sons, the eldest of whom, Abdurrashid, is custodian of the family shrine. The second, Musa, is enlisted in his body guard, and accompanied us in our tour through his father's demesne. The third is a child of eight years of age.

On the day after our arrival we visited the shrine, and ranged its courts and cloisters with perfect freedom as the guests of the king. The tomb itself we did not see, as the door of the building covering it was closed, and guarded by two aged priests, who, seated in front of it, were repeating prayers with great volubility. This mausoleum consists of a lofty dome supported on a square structure, at each corner of which is a small belfry-like tower topped with a cupola. The whole is covered with glazed tiles of blue, green and yellow ranged in cross lines. The door is lofty, and fills a narrow arch on the east face. Its sides are covered with Arabic inscriptions, and the date 1244 H (1838 A.D.), which appears amidst the writing on one side, indicates the renovation of the building under the rule of Zuhuruddin, at that time the Musalman governor of Kashghar under the Chinese.

Satoc Baghra Khan (born 944 A.D.), was the son of Tangri Cadir Baghra Khan who died during an expedition against Bukhara. He was six years old when his father died, and, with his widowed mother, was taken under the protection of his uncle, Harun Baghra Khan, who succeeded to the throne at Kashghar. At twelve years of age he accepted Islam at the hand of Abu Nasr Samani, a proselytising merchant soldier, who entered the country with a caravan of 300 men from Bukhara by way of Andijan, and took up his quarters at Artosh, at that time a flourishing trading mart.

The account given in the Tazkira Baghra Khan is to the effect that Satoc one day went out a-hunting with forty attendants on the plain near Artosh. He started a hare, and giving chase got separated from his followers. The hare, heedless of the arrow strung at him, stood, and assuming the form of a man, said, "Come! my son! I am waiting for you. God be praised I have found you alone. Come to me. Dismount. I have a few words to say."

Satoc (the name signifies "merchant"), astonished at the apparition, dismounted and knelt before the man, who then thus addressed him.

"My son! Why hold to such idolatry? You know your creator's name is Muhammad. Walk in his way."

The youth thought to himself, "What man is this who speaks thus? There is no such person here. Whence comes he?" and then addressing the figure, he said, "What is it you tell me, O sage?"

The venerable man replied, "My son! O blessed youth! I wish not your tender body in hell-fire. It grieves me." And Satoc asks, "What sort of place is hell? O sage!"

"Hell," replied the great man, "is a place of much fire, and full of scorpions, where unbelievers and sinners are drawn in and tortured in every way."

Fear seized the heart of the youth, and he exclaimed, "Tell me, O sage! and I will do what you say."

The sage repeated the creed, "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the prophet of God."

"What are these words?" asked Satoc. "What do they mean?" The sage replied, "My son! By repeating these words you become a Musalman, and go to para-

dise, where are beautiful youths, and maidens, and wine. By refusing to repeat them you go to hell, and endure all sorts of torments."

"Satoc accepted Islam, and repeating the creed, became a Musalman. He asked the sage to teach him the faith, but he told him his appointed instructor would very soon arrive, and conduct him into the perfect way, and then suddenly disappeared. Some say this personage was the minister of Iskandar Padshah, and some that he was *Dajal ul ghayb* Khoja Zinda, and others that he was an angel, but the truth is he was the prophet Khizr."

The account then goes on to say that some days later Satoc again went out a-hunting with his forty men, and on arrival at Bacu in Ostun or "Upper" Artosh, found a caravan of well dressed and highly favoured foreigners camped on the meadow. He drew near to see who they were, and was accosted by their leader, Abu Nasr Samani, who, recognising in Satoc the prince he had come in search of, praised God, and, turning to his followers, pointed to the object of their journey, and told them their purpose was accomplished. He bid them open their bales and bring out the presents, and meanwhile invited the prince to his tent. In the midst of this was heard the *muazzin's* call to prayer, and all at once leaving everything just as it happened to be, the whole caravan ranged themselves in the performance of their prayers.

Satoc was wonder-struck at the ceremony, and the confidence of the foreigners in a strange country, leaving their property thus unprotected for their devotions. He dismounted, and, on the conclusion of the prayers, learning the name of their leader, he knew by instinct that he was the teacher the prophet Khizr had

foretold, and forthwith declaring himself he accepted Islam from him.

Abu Nasr instructed him secretly for six months in the doctrines of the religion, and then his uncle Harun, discovering his apostasy, decided on killing him. But his mother intervening claimed that her son should first be put to the test to prove his innocence. The king was just then about to build an idol temple, and Satoc, in proof of his adherence to the national faith, was summoned to appear on a certain day, and, in the presence of an assembly of the nobles and grandees, to lay the foundation of the temple of their god.

He consulted his teacher in the matter, and was advised to conform to the king's command, with a mere mental reflection that the stones he set were those of a mosque, and not those of an idol temple. "For," said his instructor, "where one's own safety is concerned, the perpetration of certain unlawful acts is permissible, and in this case, provided in your mind you consider the foundations as those of a mosque, the setting of the bricks will be an act acceptable to God, and meritorious, as enabling you to escape the wiles of the infidel."

Satoc acquitted himself to the satisfaction of Harun and his Court, and was acknowledged as free from suspicion. He soon after with the aid of Abu Nasr and 600 men, to which number, during the six months of their stay here, his party had swelled by the accession of new converts and adherents, surprised the king's palace at night, and equipping his men from the royal armoury, fled with 400 horses to the hills of Tawa tagh (Camel hill) on the north of the city.

In the morning Harun and his army, awaking from the deep sleep into which a miraculous answer to the prayer of Abu Nasr had thrown them, discovered the

rebellion of the prince, and without delay took the field against him. Many desperate battles were fought, and thousands of infidels were slain, whilst at the same time thousands of new converts joined the rebels.

After some days of fighting, the army of Islam became hard pressed for provisions, and began to waver in its steadfastness to the new cause. Abu Nasr now, to satisfy the impatience of his troops and check the discontent of his followers, made a night attack upon the city. The enterprise proved successful, Harun was killed by his nephew, who then mounted the throne as king of Kashghar. And he forthwith declared Islam the law of the land. He converted 20,000 citizens in a day, and established the *Shara'* throughout his territory. His miraculous deeds of valour on this occasion were many, but the two most so were these. His sword, which in its sheath was like that wielded by other men, when drawn against the infidels, lengthened to forty yards, and mowed them down like corn before the sickle. When he charged amongst the enemy flames of fire issued from his mouth and consumed many, and terrified more to fall at his feet and become Musalmans.

He lived to the age of ninety-six years, and waged wars for the propagation of Islam during all his long reign, and established its law up to Caracoram in the north-east, and to Turmiz on the Amú river in the south-west. He was carrying his successes into Khita, but he got ill at Turfan, and returned to Kashghar, where, after lingering a whole year, he died (1037). On his death-bed he resigned the government, and care of his family to Abul Fattah, the son of Abu Nasr, and he died three years later. He thus charged him: "This is my last will to you. Hold fast the faith of the Prophet. I commit the *Shari'at* to your care. Observe it strictly.

My children remain young. Educate them carefully so that they commit no act to shame them before God. O Abul Fattah! copy me. Walk in my way and you will attain to future honour. More than this I will not say. In your prayers remember me. Hold high ambition and be manly. Seek aid of God and His Prophet. Remember me always and weep for me."

After this the aged king took leave of his friends and, giving instructions for his burial, assured them that his soul went only from one body to another, and died not. "From a tray set before him he took a rose, and smelled it; he next took up a streaked red and white apple, and ate it; he then drank some sherbet from a goblet. He repeated the creed, and standing up turned three times in a circle and sang the Persian couplet—

> A drop taken from the sea lessens not its volume,
> The departing soul rends but the veil of its durance.

He then sat down and, straightening out his legs towards the *cabla* (the Mekka shrine), resigned his soul with the close of day. He was buried at Mashhad in Altun Artosh with great pomp. Two perfect saints, seventy thousand learned men, twenty-two thousand crescentaders, and fifteen thousand common people attended the funeral ceremony." Some miracles are recorded as attending the mournful ceremony, and amongst others, that the deceased monarch appeared in the flesh to his faithful subjects some days after his burial to cheer and exhort them to a stedfast adherence to the faith of the Prophet, and united action for its propagation amongst the heathen.

Four years ago the Amir visited the shrine with all his court, and performed the customary religious exercises at the tomb of the royal saint with great ceremony and devotion, to testify his thanks to God for the suc-

cess vouchsafed to his arms. He besought a continuance of the saint's blessing to his humble disciple in the propagation of Islam, and propitiated his favour by the sacrifice to his memory of some hundreds of oxen, sheep, horses, and camels, on which the poor of the vicinity were feasted. He restored the ancient lands of the monastery attached to the tomb, and built a college, mosque, and almshouse around the shrine; and enclosed the whole within walls. We found about a hundred boys and men in the college, and were told that two hundred were borne on the rolls. It is as large an establishment as that in connection with the shrine of Hazrat Afac, and as there so here the teaching is almost wholly of a religious kind. A party of four or five of the teachers who attended us over the establishment received the gold pieces, or *tila*, presented by the envoy with due deference, and holding up their hands invoked a blessing on the donor, to which the crowd of students replied *Amin!*

In the afternoon our host's huntsmen brought in a wild pig which they had captured in the reed jungle near Kol Taylac. She was a huge creature, and looked a clean and powerful brute. A strong ridge of long bristles ran down the spine, and a thick layer of short, curly, soft wool grew at the roots of the smaller bristles all over the body—encasing it, in fact, in a warm padding of crispy soft hair fully an inch thick on the back and flanks. The short tusks were secured closed upon a bit of wood in the mouth by strong cords, and the animal was fastened down to a stretcher of rough poles by a regular network of similar bonds.

A few days later, we had a day's boar-hunting near Kol Taylac, and killed a very fine tusker with the aid of the hunting eagle. We crossed the Fyzabad river on the

ice at about eight miles from the settlement, and entered a thick jungle of reeds and tamarisks with about twenty of our host's men, and two trained eagles. The men armed themselves for the sport with clubs bent at the end like hockey-sticks. As soon as the boar was started one of the eagles was flown at him, and all the field followed his flight with tremendous shouts and flourishing of sticks. The bird followed the dodgings of his prey, sailing close above the reeds, and pounced on him at the first bit of open he came to with a sharp claw behind which nearly upset him. The horsemen immediately closing in from all sides, mobbed the brute thus checked in his course, and stunned him with blows upon the head, and then deliberately shot him. Our Andijani attendants entered into the sport with great spirit and some recklessness. They gave us a very interesting account of the *jirga*, or hunting circle, which, in the time of the Mughal Emperors, was a national custom observed with state ceremony and minuteness of procedure. Whole regiments were employed as beaters to a central spot, and whole districts of hundreds of square miles were included within the circle of their operations. All people overtaken by the beaters were compelled to join their ranks, and infringements of the laws of the chase were visited with severe and exemplary punishment. The Atalik, on return from his campaign against Turfan, organised a *jirga* and beat up all the country between Turfan and Acsu. Immense quantities of game of all sorts were slain, and many of his men and officers lost their lives and limbs by accidents of the sport.

Whilst engaged in this sport we put up a number of pheasants in the cover of the brushwood, but a more important business occupied our attention and they were left to the enjoyment of their safety. The golden eagle which is

in this country trained for sport is a magnificent bird of immense strength. It is called *cará cuch* and *burghút* by the natives, and is hooded and jessied in the same way as the falcon; but, owing to its great weight, is carried on a cross-tree of wood which is held in the hand and supported upon the pommel of the saddle. At Yarkand we saw a large number of them, and the Dadkhwah informed us he had had one of them in his possession for nearly twenty-five years.

They are used equally for the pig, antelope, stag and wolf, and any large game such as geese, herons, &c.; whilst the ordinary falcons of northern India (the *baz*, *chargh*, *lachin*, &c.), which are also trained for sport in this country, are used for hawking pheasants, bustards, wild duck, &c., &c. On our trip round to the Sughun valley we had some *charghs* with us, and they gave us some very good sport with the hare and partridge. During our stay at Yarkand we went out with the Dadkhwah's eagles on one occasion after wild geese and herons on the marsh to the east of the city. They were not, however, in good condition, and only one out of fifteen or sixteen showed us any sport with the herons, though another of them very cleverly overturned, with a cuff behind, some of the pariah dogs prowling about the city purlieus at which he was flown for our amusement.

In the enclosure of our host's fortified dwelling we saw some very fine specimens of the double-humped camel of the country. They were noble looking creatures, and nearly white in colour; of small size with clean slim limbs, and bushy shags of soft, woolly hair on the shoulders, haunches, and throat; the head was handsomely formed, and the eyes were large and intelligent. They have a peculiar sharp cry, quite different from the noisy murmur of the ungainly but useful brute we are

accustomed to in India. The deserts on the east of this territory, in the vicinity of Lob between Turfan and Khutan, are the home of the wild camel. It is still, as of old, hunted there, and is described as a very vicious and fleet animal, and of small size, not much bigger than a large horse. A Kirghiz shepherd, who had resided for some years at Lob, told me that he had frequently seen them at graze, and had himself joined in many hunting expeditions against them for the sake of their wool, which is very highly prized for the manufacture of a superior kind of camlet.

We left Artosh on the 17th, and went northward through a gap in the range of gravel and clay banks that separate it from Arghu (which is a narrow valley similar to that of Artosh but much smaller), and, crossing its cultivation near the village of that name, at about eight miles came to a small outpost fort of the Chinese, which is now held by a guard of twelve men of the Artosh troops.

It stands on a small flat piece of ground at the entrance to the Tangitar defile, and is surrounded by a few fields of corn stubble, the last signs of cultivation in this direction. Indeed, beyond Arghu there is no fixed agricultural population, nor any trace of cultivation except this bit. Here, just beyond the outpost, we entered a long winding defile between hills of gravel and clay resting upon limestone, and following up the course of its brisk rivulet along a shelving bank covered with a thick scrub of reeds, tamarisks, and thorny bushes, at about ten miles arrived at Corghan Tangitar.

This is a small castellated fort built on the summit of a rock at the entrance to the gorge which gives the place its name, and is held by a garrison of twenty-two men. On the rocks above on each side the entrance are four

little redoubts which look up the gorge and command its passage. They are almost inaccessible from the side of the fort, and quite so from that of the gorge, and are only capable of holding five or six men each.

There is a clump of willow and poplar trees on a small ledge above the bank opposite the fort. It is called Mazar Sugat Carawal, or "The shrine of the willow outpost," and is said to mark the spot where Satoc, in one of his many campaigns in the cause of Islam, miraculously produced a spring of water for his thirsty soldiers, by striking his sword upon the rock. This is a wild little spot, and we saw it in its bleakest aspect. The dark cleft of the gorge between high overhanging cliffs of limestone rock stood before us in all the asperity of its reality, and in the obscuring shades of evening grew into the most gloomy object on the limited scene—fit abode of the goblin and ghost with which local superstition peoples its sombre and silent recesses.

The Corghan had been prepared for our accommodation, and five Kirghiz tents had been pitched for our followers on the solitary bank below. We found the little huts, however, so full of stable refuse and filth, and so redolent of unwholesome smells, that we gladly exchanged their shelter for the little less dirty, and much less efficient protection of the Kirghiz dwellings outside. The evening set in cold and cloudy, and an icy north wind, streaming out of the gorge, whistled through the tatters of our felt *acoe* in a most uncomfortable manner, and very quickly dissipated the charms of Kirghiz life which our imagination had pictured. We had a taste now of the reality of life in an *acoe*, and during the next few days of our travel amongst them got a practical experience of how the poor nomads fare, and with no reason to envy their lot. Whatever the charms of a free

life on the boundless steppe may be I will not attempt to divine, but content myself with the belief that it requires special training to appreciate them. A broiling sun, blinding glare, and suffocating dust, are the accompaniments of the summer; whilst a cutting wind, withering cold, and forced inactivity, with more or less of snow, are the concomitants of winter. To face these and live through them is the struggle of the nomad's life, and to help him in the battle he has only the shelter of a tattered and battered *acoe*, and the comfort of a stupifying *cumis* brandy.

In the morning we passed through a corner of the Corghan, and turning round an overlooking rock, descended to the passage of the Tangitar just inside its southern end, which was barricaded with cross-poles and bundles of thorns propped together by loose boulders. The Tangitar, or "Dark Strait," is a tortuous and tight passage, from ten to thirty paces across, between lofty cliffs of limestone. We found its stream frozen hard, and after ten minutes' ride over its winding and slippery surface, emerged from it on to a basin in which three large drainage gullies meet from the N.W. and N. and N.E. respectively.

We proceeded up the centre one, and presently rose out of its bed on to a wide rolling pasture valley some eight or ten miles wide by twenty long from west to east. Across it to the north is seen the range of hills which separate this plateau of Yalghuz Say from that of Ac Say, which lies at a higher elevation and is the favourite summer rendezvous of the Kirghiz camps, as this is the winter retreat of some of them.

The hills have a very dreary look and are topped thinly with snow. Bears are said to abound upon them, and when hard pressed for food to live upon the marmot

which they dig out of their burrows. At the present time, however, their principal occupants are vast herds of the wild sheep and ibex.

We went along the Say, or "Stony Pasture," a little way, and then turned off eastward, and with the hawks killed a number of hares and partridges in the scrub at the foot of the hills. At about twelve miles from Tangitar we alighted at a cluster of six or seven *acoe* which had been prepared for us near a Kirghiz camp that stood on the open plain in the vicinity of one of their burying-grounds called Tigarmatti. These cemeteries generally have five or six large domed graves or *gumbaz*, which at a distance deceive the stranger with the hopes of an abode of the living, instead of the habitation of the dead which he really finds them to be.

A few camels and horses, with horned cattle and sheep, were scattered over the plateau around the camp, which only numbered some twelve or fifteen tents, but all the rest of its wide surface showed no signs of human life. Our tents at this place were as wretched specimens of human habitations as those at the last, and proved worthless as shelter from the weather except to the swarms of vermin which nestled in the tattered felts of their walls and floors and roofs. They were, in fact, simple man-traps for the capture of fresh blood for these voracious and vicious little creatures.

The night was clear and starlight, and a sharp north-west wind swept over the plain. It blew off from the *acoe* which I occupied the felt that covered the smoke-hole in the centre of its roof, (which was a shallow vaulted dome formed of ribs of willow wands concentrating from the circumference of the walls below to the hoop of wood they supported above, and was covered in by some large felts spread over it and secured by fasten-

ings round the circumference,) and immediately the cold air poured in like so much icy water. It chilled the tent, in which we had no fire, for the rest of the night, for though stopped from above by the replacement of the felt after a good deal of trouble, it poured through a dozen holes in the ragged covering of the walls. Sleep, or even rest, was banished by the acute pain of cold in the hands and feet which completely outweighed the torments of the vicious little creatures whose activity our presence had aroused. Yet I was warmly clad in a huge sheep-skin cloak worn over all the usual winter clothing of England, and had my feet encased in capacious bags of sheepskin with warm socks inside their coat of wool. In the morning the minimum thermometer set outside the tent registered the temperature at 20° below zero.

The Kirghiz nomads of the Artosh district are reckoned at one hundred families. They are dependents of the Khan, who styles them his *Fucara* or "Poor." They certainly bear all the appearances of their title, for of a party of some thirty men we saw here not one had a look of independence or respectability. They are not a fair sample, however, of their people. They are poor outcasts from various camps of the Burut Kirghiz who are now under Russian rule, such as the Chong Baghish, Sarigh Baghish, Sayak, Chirik, Kochin, &c., whose steppes are on the north of the Alatagh.

The Kirghiz of Kashghar are reckoned at thirty thousand tents, but of this number not more than a third are acknowledged subjects of the Amir. The rest are divided between the Russians on the north, and the Khan of Khocand on the west. Of those now attached to Kashghar the Chong Baghish of Actagh, and the Sayak of Caratagh are the most important camps, and next to them the Nayman of Sarighcul and Caracash.

The Nayman, who are here reckoned at a thousand tents, were formerly Nestorian Christians, and came here from the north-east of Ila in the beginning of the thirteenth century with their prince Koshluk, who was driven out of his own hereditary pastures by the rising conqueror Changiz. Koshluk seized the government of the Cara Khitay from their aged king Gorkhan and established himself with his Nayman at Kashghar, and waged a war against the people for the suppression of Islam. He was soon, however, chased out of the country and fled for shelter into the glens of Sarighcul and Wakhan, where he was overtaken and slain by his pursuers.

From Tigarmatti we marched to Bash Sughun or "Head Sughun"—fifteen miles—and next day to Ayagh Sughun or "Foot Sughun"—twenty miles. Near the former place we quitted the plateau and entered the narrow valley of the Sughun river which drains it to the eastward, and were accommodated for the night in some tents borrowed from the Kirghiz camp hard by. It numbered sixteen tents, and had some large herds of horses at graze on the plain close by. The river, which was more or less frozen, flows on a loose shingly bottom between low shelving banks of sand and clay, encrusted with salines, and covered with patches of reed and tamarisk thickets. Here and there on its course are thin forests of poplar and willow, myricaria and elœagnus, wild rose and ephœdra, and some traces of Kirghiz cultivation.

At Ayagh Sughun we found a camp of twelve tents. Here Capt. Trotter and Dr Stoliczka with a small escort of Andijanis left us for an excursion to the Balauti range of hills which separate this from the Acsay valley of Ush Turfan, whilst the Envoy and the rest of our party pro-

ceeded down the course of the river through a winding valley covered with snow. We turned off from the river some way below a small outpost fort, and a little beyond it, emerging from the hills, went down a *sirt* or "slope" which extends along their base and sinks gradually to the level country, and then crossed a wide waste of salines and sands on to the cultivation of Kol Taylac on the Kashghar plain. After a halt there of two days we returned to Kashghar by way of Artosh, where we met our polite host again, and thanked him for his kind hospitality. His son Musa, who conducted us on our tour, completed the role of his attentions by accompanying us as far as Bibi Miryam, where, on taking his leave, the Envoy acknowledged his good service by robing him in a very handsome silk *khilat.*

He was an intelligent and spirited young man of about twenty-two years of age, and proved an agreeable companion by his frank cordiality and varied information. He gave me an account of the atrocities committed by the Chinese in suppressing the Khoja revolt under Wali Khan, and described how they executed his own grandfather and uncles. They were ripped open and their hearts cut out whilst alive, and thrown to the dogs in the street. Their heads were then cut off, and placed in cages along with dozens of others that lined the roads in front of the city gates as a warning to evildoers. On my expressing horror at such barbarities, he said, "Not at all. It was their turn and they did as we had done to them. We are much alike in war."

"And in what do you differ?" I asked.

"We are Musalmans and they are idolaters. That's all."

"Is there no other difference?" I inquired. "Are you not much superior to the Chinese?"

"In religion we are. In nothing else."

"But, you speak a different language, and are of a different race," I interposed.

"That's true, but we are all Tatars, whether called Turk, Mughal, Manjhu, or Khitay, and our languages are as different as the number of our nations. In the time of the Khitay some seven languages were spoken in this country."

"Amongst their troops and officials, you mean, I presume," I said.

"Yes, and traders who came from all parts of Mungholia. Even now, everything you see in this country is Chinese. Our dress is Khitay, our food, domestic utensils, and industries are Khitay. Our manners are Khitay. And so was our trade."

"Of course you speak of the time when the Khitay were your rulers. Everything is not now as it was then."

"Yes. Everything is much the same as then except the *Sharia't*. But things are changing every day; and now we never see any signs of the Khitay trade, nor of the wealth they brought here."

"You talk as if you were a Khitay yourself."

"No. I hate them. But they were not bad rulers. We had everything then. There is nothing now."

And he was not the only man I met in the country who held the same opinions. In fact many spoke to me, and others in our camp in comparatively very favourable terms of the rule they had lost.

CHAPTER XI.

OUR excursion to the foot of the Tianshan, or Alatagh as it is locally called, despite the severity of the cold, and the emptiness of the country, was a very interesting tour, and afforded us an insight into the character of the region immediately beyond the settled and cultivated suburbs of the city. Here as elsewhere in the tracts we had traversed it was but a step that took us from a scene of population, plenty and industry, to one of loneliness, poverty and barbarity.

We saw the country in the depth of winter, and met its few wandering camps which in the shelter of its valleys find that pasture and protection which the higher elevations at this season deny them, but nowhere did we find the indications of a more thickly peopled condition than that it actually presented to us. In spring the fresh pastures of its wide platéaux and rolling downs are roamed by the camps we found sheltered, or "wintered," as the term here is, in the nooks and hollows of the low hills of bare rock and gravel which shut them off from the plain country, and in summer their parched wastes are deserted for the higher parts of the boundary range, on the other side of which are the camps of the same people, subjects of Russia.

On the 7th March, according to arrangements previously made, the envoy, attended by his officers in undress uniform, paid a visit to Beg Culi Beg, or as he is usually called Beg Bacha. He is the eldest son,

and heir apparent of the Amir, and now rejoices in the title of Shahzada. He arrived here a month ago from Acsu, when his next brother, Hacc Culi Beg, set out from this to take his place on the frontier. We alighted at the gate of the court of his residence inside the fort, and were received in the verandah of his reception room by our friend Haji Tora, who was present to manage the ceremony.

He conducted our chief into the room, and introduced him to the prince who rose from his seat in the opposite corner and shook hands. We were introduced in turn, and shaking hands bowed politely to his perfunctorily interrogative *Salamat*, and fell back to seats on the carpet along the wall in the corner of which he sat, at one side of the window which there opened into the verandah, whilst Haji Tora seated himself opposite to him on its other side. The usual conventionalities of salutation were then exchanged between the envoy and the prince, and with the interchance of compliments a double barrelled gun was presented, whilst a file of men went past the window with other presents, all of which were accepted with becoming indifference. And then followed a pause of silence, truly Oriental in its duration and gravity, and the tedium of which was at length cut short by the welcome appearance of the *dasturkhwan*—an institution, which as the occasion illustrated, possesses merits other than those of a merely alimentary nature.

The prince was extremely reserved, and assumed an air of self-conscious dignity, which he did not relax during the interview. He spoke little, and that mostly in monosyllables, curt and to the purpose; but our acknowledgements of the hospitality and kindness of the Amir in so handsomely providing for our comfort

elicited no response. Haji Tora came to the rescue, and made a conversation into which he drew our reticent host by very deferentially addressing his remarks to him.

On the removal of the *dasturkhwan* we all rose, and the prince, folding his hands in the opposite sleeves of his *juba*, acknowledged our bows with a nod for the envoy, and a stare out of the window for the rest of us. He is a powerfully built young man of 26 years of age, and is of darker complexion than most of the people here. His mother is a Capchac of Juelik in the Ac Masjid territory, and he bears some of the uncouth characters of that tribe in his features, which are thickset and heavy. The lips are thick and the mouth projects forward, but the nose is slightly arched and well formed. His general expression is that of pride and severity. Even in his conversation with Haji Tora, who spoke in tones of submissive deference, he did not relax the stern set of his looks.

He is very popular amongst the Andijani troops, and enjoys a reputation for bravery, and military skill. Many stories are current of his valiant deeds against the enemy on the Orumchi and Manas frontier, and if there be any truth in them, the sentiment of mercy must be foreign to his nature, for from all accounts his troops have reduced that formerly populous and thriving country to a waste of desolation and ruin.

He maintains as strict a discipline in his Court as does the Amir, and is dreaded for the severity of his punishments; but he is popular amongst the troops on account of his liberality in the distribution of plunder, and his protection of Islam. He is said, however, to be illiterate, and proud, and wanting in judgment; but considering his sudden rise from a position of obscurity

to that of heir apparent to the rule of this newly conquered territory, in the subjugation of the eastern districts of which he has taken so active a part, this is not to be wondered at, and doubtless the pride of royalty, so jealously guarded in its infancy, will assume a more conciliating form in its maturity. At all events, for the sake of his subjects, let us hope so.

In all our dealings with the Court, and officials of this state we met with uniform civility, but on terms of an equality, the largest share of which was naturally reserved for themselves. And consequently when we visited their magnates, the ceremony was taken as a proper mark of respect, without necessitating any return of the compliment. This was in keeping with the dignity assumed by the government, for in other respects our treatment was most liberal, and wherever we went it was plain to perceive that the most minute orders had preceded us for the reception of the king's guests, and the conduct of the government officials even in the smallest matters.

As to the people of the country, from what we were enabled to see of them, they appear to be singularly free from prejudice against foreigners, and altogether indifferent, on the score of his nationality or religion, of his presence amongst them, so long as he pays his way, and does not wantonly offend against the customs of the country. On one occasion, shortly after our arrival in Yarkand, I visited the city with Capt. Chapman, and as we entered the grain-market our usual cicerone loitered behind in some thoroughfare on the way. We went about from shop to shop, and examined the weights and measures, and made our inquiries at the different stalls without even attracting curious idlers about us, though a vagabond *darvesh* on the other side of the square did his best to direct attention to us by

denouncing us at the top of his voice as infidels, and shaking his club at us menacingly told us to depart. His declamation fell upon indifferent ears, however, for beyond staring at him and laughing, the crowd gave no response to his sentiments, and, we taking no heed to hurry our movements, the rascal went away capering, and gesticulating, and shouting after the wanton fashion of his order. If he only foreknew how many *tilas* his brethren were to net in the peregrinations of these same infidels he would have concealed his feelings, and deprived me of the opportunity of chronicling a solitary illustration in this country of what in other countries not so far off his fraternity are no way chary in dispensing—curse and insult to the *Farangi*—the Frank, the European.

This was the only instance in which, during our stay in the country, I saw the fanaticism of Islam escape from the check set upon it, and I can judge how much we are indebted to the liberal-minded counsels of our friend Haji Tora for the freedom with which, under the Amir's favour, we visited its holy places; a freedom we are strangers to in our own dominions in India, and one I doubt not withheld from less favoured guests at Kashghar. I hope my opinion will prove wrong, and that the liberality extended to us is but an earnest of the enlightened policy the Amir is about to adopt towards all foreign visitors, irrespective of their creed or nationality.

The business of the envoy with the Amir having been brought to a conclusion, and the projected tour through his territory being found impracticable, it was decided that we should proceed to Yangi Hissar, and there await the intelligence expected from Kabul, as to whether the route to India by that way was available to us, whilst a party from our camp proceeded to explore the route

through Sarigh Cul and Wakhan, up to the frontier of the Kashghar Amir's territory.

These preliminaries settled Haji Tora and Ihrar Khan Tora, on the 9th March, came over from the palace with the parting presents from the Amir, which included a horse for each of us, and talked over the arrangements for the journey. These extended over two or three days, and finally, the 16th was fixed for our farewell visit to the Amir.

Meanwhile messengers were sent off with orders to Husen Shah, Tocsabay, the governor of Sarigh Cul, to smoothe the path for our party coming that way with the requisite supplies and carriage; and carts and horses were collected for the carriage of our heavy camp from this.

The weather at the time was very variable, though the intense frosts of the winter had ceased. The snow and heavy clouds of the 8th and 9th had disappeared, and on the 10th the sun shone out brightly in a beautifully clear blue sky, and for the first time since our arrival gave us a really good view of the mountains to the north and west—a magnificent barrier of snow culminating at their point of junction in the towering mass of the Tirak Dawan, "The poplar tree pass."

Next day all was again hidden from view by a dense nimbus, and snow which fell all night and up to noon of the 12th, when it covered the ground to a depth of between eight and ten inches. And the sky continued gloomy till our departure.

According to previous arrangement at 3 P.M. on the 16th March, the envoy, attended by all his staff in full dress uniform, visited the Amir to take leave and thank him for the hospitable reception accorded to the embassy. Haji Tora and Ihrar Khan Tora came over from the palace to escort our party. The same ceremony was

observed as on previous occasions, except that Haji Tora was present, and took a seat on the floor opposite to us, and some way on the left of the Amir. The envoy, through one of his staff, thanked the Amir for his unbounded hospitality and many favours, and assured him of our gratitude for the very kind reception we had met on all sides from the day we entered his territories. He acknowledged the attentions of his officials on the march, and on the excursions to Chacmac, Maralbashi, and Artosh, and expressed a hope that no act of any member of his party had caused offence to the humblest of his subjects. In allusion to the business of the embassy he hoped that the treaty of commerce would prove mutually advantageous to both countries, and concluded with a prayer for the long life and prosperity of His Highness. The Amir was highly pleased, and relaxing the usual gravity of his features, placed his hand upon his heart, and with much animation repeatedly exclaimed, "God be praised!" "Please God it will." "The country is your own." "You are welcome here at all times." "I am highly honoured by your visit," &c., &c. The *dasturkhwan* was now brought in, and over it His Highness spoke with more animation and suavity than on any previous occasion, and on our rising to depart, said, "I will stand up," and suiting the action to the word, shook hands with each in turn, and wished us a safe journey back to India. Haji Tora accompanied us back to the Residency, and after congratulating the envoy on the success of the meeting, returned to the palace, whilst Colonel Gordon and Captain Biddulph rode off to the city to bid adieu to the Dadkhwah on the part of the envoy. Next morning we marched away from Kashghar, and staying the night at Yapchang, on the 18th March alighted at the garden-house we formerly rested

in at Yangi Hissar. The country still wore its wintry aspect, and vegetation had not commenced to sprout, but here and there we saw the plough at work as the herald of the approach of spring. The atmosphere was intensely hazy, and obscured the prospect beyond a radius of a couple of miles more or less.

As we rode out of the gate of the Residency a salute of nineteen guns was fired on the parade in front of the fort, and we found a large crowd of soldiery, and camp people collected to see us start. Haji Tora and Ihrar Khan Tora escorted us three miles on our way, and then bidding us farewell, returned to report progress to the Amir. We went on our way with a Yuzbashi and Onbashi (centurion and decurion) and half a dozen soldiers who did the honours of the dasturkhwan as usual.

At Sogholoc we were met by our old friend Khal Muhammad, and his guard of men in yellow buff with the *dasturkhwan*, and they accompanied us on our way. On arrival at Yangi Hissar we were received by Mulla Najmuddin, a native of Oratappa, and commandant of the troops here. He had about 400 men seated in a long line along the road in front of the fort. They all wore white turbans, and had their prong-rest guns set on the ground in line before them, and as we rode past looked respectfully down to the ground.

As far as one could judge from the faces of the forms wrapped up, as it seemed, in so many bundles of clothes, they are a fine body of men; and seen thus together present a notably different physiognomy to that of the people of the country. They are in fact Uzbak and not Turk, and show a stronger development of the Tatar type than the peasantry of the country do.

Najmuddin informed us that he had received orders to attend to our wants here, and, before taking his

leave, accompanied us to our quarters where he saw us comfortably settled in the rooms prepared for us on the previous occasion of our halt here. The next two days were occupied in the providing of carriage, &c. for the party proceeding under command of Colonel Gordon to Wakhan. He set out on the 21st with Captain Biddulph, Captain Trotter, and Dr Stoliczka, and about twenty-five or thirty natives of India attached to the embassy, including Rasaidar Afzal Khan of the 11th B.C., and Munshi Abdussubhan of the Survey. We accompanied our fortunate comrades some miles out on their enviable journey (the one above all others I had hoped to make when we set out on this march), and bidding them God speed returned to our quarters. We did not meet again till after our return to India.

Captain Chapman at the same time turning off at a branch in the road took his way to Yarkand to arrange for the despatch of our heavy baggage thence to India, and he returned to Yangi Hissar on the 28th March. Meanwhile the envoy and I explored the suburbs of our dwelling, and after the return of our comrade, leaving him to rest after his labours, set out for an excursion to the Cum Shahidan to visit the shrine of Ordam Padshah.

We left our quarters after an early breakfast on the 1st April, and going through the town followed an E.S.E. route through the suburbs beyond it. They extend for ten miles in a continuous succession of fields and farmsteads, which are surrounded by their orchards and vineyards, and connected by rows of polled willow, and poplar, and mulberry, and œleagnus, and other trees along the water-courses. We crossed several of these irrigation canals *en route*, the largest of them by bridge at seventy-five minutes out. It is a considerable channel

from the Shahnaz river which irrigates all the southern portion of this settlement. With the exception of a few weeping willows on which the buds were beginning to form, we saw no signs of reviving vegetation.

In two hours we reached the last house of the village of Syghan on the verge of the desert, and alighted in a plantation of plum and mulberry trees for the *dasturkhwan* there spread for us.

In this distance of ten miles (eight from the town) we passed through the villages or parishes, here called *kand*, of Mangshin, Khoja Aric, and Sayghan. They are collections of scattered farmsteads, seldom more than thirty appearing within the range of vision at one time from any part of the plain, and are planted along the course of a canal which is drawn off from the Shahnaz river near Tawiz or Tabriz, a village ten miles or so to the south-west of the town of Yangi Hissar.

From Sayghan our route continued E.S.E. over an arid desert waste of coarse gravel and sand, skirting low ridges of clay and gravel on our right, and showing a thin strip of cultivation away to the left which extended for a couple of miles on to the desert like a long feeler projected out from the main body of the settlement.

In two hours from Sayghan we came to a roadside well, in which was a little brackish water at six fathoms down, and then turning S.E. rose up to the crest of the ridges along the base of which our path lay. The view of the country from this slight elevation was weird and desolate in the extreme. On the other side, at a mile we passed a roadside well, and at two miles more another—like the first, both were mere shafts sunk in the sand to a reservoir of salt water below. A little way further on the ground becomes hillocky, and supports a thin growth of reeds in the hollows; and be-

yond this again it slopes away to a wide undulating waste of sand and gravel.

At an hour and fifteen minutes from the ridge we came to some miserable little huts on the side of the road, and further on, passing a few others, came to a collection of three or four houses where the friars of this little monastic colony met us on the road with, according to Tatar custom, an offering of bread and salt. Beyond these a little way, and at two hours, or eight miles from the ridge, we alighted at the monastery of Hazrat Begam (whose grave is outside its walls to the S.E.), where we were met at the door by the Shekh, an old man of eighty years, named Shah Macsud, who gave us a hospitable welcome to his poor abode.

The monastery is a wretched little place cast away in a blank waste of arid desert, and is apparently fast falling to decay. It has a chapel and refectory, with half a dozen small chambers for the monks, and a large well of insipid water in one of the chambers of the inner court, the area of which is shaded by the spreading branches of three very aged poplar trees. In the outer court are some stables, and outside it, on the plain to the south, are eight or ten huts crowded together. They are miserable hovels, and in front of their doors are heaps of old bones, ashes, and filth, about which grovel some semi-nude, demented beggars, in company with a few mangy dogs, and emaciated donkeys all covered with sores, the very personification of poverty, misery, and dirt. There is no trace of cultivation in this place, and all supplies for the community of fifty or sixty friars, and their families here, come from Yangi Hissar and Kizili where are situated their glebe lands.

The lady whose sainted memory this shrine perpetuates was the cousin of Khoja Ahmad Yasawi (the

patron saint of Turkistan, and whose tomb there is called Hazrat Sultan), and the wife of Hasan Baghra Khan who was killed near Yangi Hissar in the wars with the Chinese of Khutan in the middle of the eleventh century. On the defeat of the king's army she fled into the desert, and was here overtaken, and slain by the enemy. Her grave is marked by a low mound of sand and clay on the top of which are stuck a number of poles with yak tails, and streamers of rags. On the plain half a mile to the south are the remains of an ancient fort, now barely traceable in the sand, which is said to have been occupied as an outpost by the Khutan prince, Nuktarashid, during the war against Kashghar and the princes of the Baghra Khan family. Its area is covered with bits of coarse gritty pottery, and fragments of green glass; and coins are sometimes found after strong winds have blown away the sand.

Next day we went twelve miles in a northerly course to Ordam Padshah. At first the road slopes down to a wide hollow which drains to the south-eastwards, and then rises up to the ridge which we crossed yesterday a few miles higher up to the N.W. On the way to this we passed a number of shallow wells and superficial cisterns on the sides of the road. In all the water was so salt that most of our Indian cattle refused to drink it.

From the top of the ridge of clay and gravel, which here forms a high and broad bank, we got a good view of the desert away to the east, for the ridge soon breaks up and subsides in that direction to the level of the plain. The plain in that direction presents a vast undulating surface drained by shallow and very wide water-runs in which is a thin growth of reeds and rough bushes, but no sign of running water.

But to the north it presents a perfect sea of loose sand

advancing in regular wave lines from N.W. to S.E. The sand-dunes are mostly from ten to twenty feet high, but some are seen like little hills, full a hundred feet high and in some spots higher. They cover the plain, of which the hard clay is seen between their rows, with numberless chains of two or three or more together in a line, and follow in successive rows one behind the other just like the marks left by wave-ripples on a sandy beach, only on a large scale.

Towards the south-east these sand-dunes all present a steep bank in the shape of a crescent the horns of which slope forwards and downwards to points on the ground. The horns start from the high central part of the body of the crescent, which, in the opposite direction, tails off in a long slant down to the plain. These dunes cover the whole country towards the north and north-west as far as the eye can reach, but towards the east they cease at four or five miles to the right of our road, and beyond that distance is seen the undulating smooth surface of the desert.

From the ridge up to the shrine itself, and next day for some miles further, our path wound amongst and over these sand dunes. At about four miles from the ridge we passed a deserted post-stage half submerged under the advancing sands. One of the priests of Mazar Hazrat Begam, who was with us as guide, told us it was called Langar Bulghar Akhund, and said that it was built eighty years ago on an, at that time, open space in the sands, but had been abandoned since thirty years owing to the encroaching sands having swallowed up its court, and risen over its roof.

I got down to examine the place, and found the wood-work, and fire-places, and shelves in two rooms, and also a part of the roof in a perfectly fresh, and well preserved

state as if but just vacated. About half the building was buried under a dune the sand of which stood above the rest of it to a height of six or eight feet; and on each side in rear were much larger dunes whose regular crescentic form was perfect, and uninjured by any obstruction. At one side of the two rooms still uncovered, and which faced to the S.E., was another room filled to the door with sand which seemed to have crushed in the roof.

At Ordam Pasha, where we halted a day, we found some tenements actually occupied whilst in course of submergence; showing that the process is usually a very gradual one, until the symmetry of the dune is so broken by the obstructing object that its loose materials subside by a sudden dissolution of its component particles, and thus overwhelm the obstruction. In this particular instance a chain of three crescentic dunes side by side had advanced in a line across the plain till one of the outer crescents had struck the walls of the court of the tenement, and growing up against it had in time overtopped, and then overflowed and filled its area by its downfall; whilst the other two crescents at its side continuing in an unobstructed course, maintained their proper form uninjured. The same cause which propelled them gradually forward also operated to drive the remainder of the broken dune forward, and it would in course of time not only bury the whole tenement, but would ultimately pass on beyond it, and resume its original form on the open space further on, in line with the other two crescents of the chain, thus leaving the tenement more or less uncovered, till it was again submerged by the next following row of similar sand-dunes.

These sand-dunes are formed by the action of the periodical north and north-west winds which here blow

over the plain persistently during the spring months. And the reason of their progress is this. That once formed the wind drives forward the loose particles on its surface, so that those on the sides, where there is least resistance, project forwards in the form of long horns, whilst those in the centre ride over each other till they produce the high curved bank between them; and on being propelled still further they topple over the bank out of the influence of the wind, but subject still to that of their gravity, which carries them down the steep slope till they reach the ground. And this action continued for a length of time is the cause of the gradual and symmetrical advance of the dunes. The rate of their progress it is impossible to determine, as it depends entirely on the varying force of the propelling power, the slope of the land and the obstructions on its surface. But the phenomenon as we saw it actually in course of operation explains the manner in which the cities of Lob, and Katak, and others of this territory have become overwhelmed in a flood of sand. And it confirms the veracity of the statements made by the shepherds who roam the deserts, to the effect that in these old ruined sites the houses now and then appear for awhile from under the sand, and again for awhile disappear under it.

The "Tarikhi Rashidi" gives a very interesting account of the destruction of Katak from this cause, just at the time that Toghluc Tymur ascended the throne at Acsu about the middle of the fourteenth century, which, in the light thrown upon it by the examination of the sand-dunes at Cum Shahidan, is perfectly intelligible.

From the account given in the work quoted it would appear that the fate of the city had long been foreseen, and that portions of it must have passed under the sands

before the catastrophe which finally led to its abandonment drove the hero of our author's story out of it. Mirza Hydar states that for several months the priest of the city, Shekh Jamaluddin (a descendant of the celebrated divine, Maulana Shujáuddin Mahmúd, who was spared from the general butchery of the priests when Changiz took Bukhara, and sent with his family to Caracoram, whence, on its subsequent destruction, his sons moved to Katak), repeatedly warned his audience in the Friday sermons of the impending calamity; and that finally, seeing the danger imminent, he informed his congregation of a divine order to himself to quit the city and flee from the coming wrath of God. He then formally bid them "farewell" from the pulpit and forthwith took his departure from the doomed abode.

He left the city, it would seem, in a violent sandstorm, and hurried away with his family, and such effects as he could carry with them. After he had gone some way one of his companions—the *muazzin* or "crier to prayer" of his mosque—returned to fetch something left behind, and took the opportunity to mount the minaret, and for the last time chaunt the "bed-time" call to prayer from its tower. In descending he found the sand had accumulated so high up the doorway that it was impossible to open it. He consequently had to re-ascend the tower and throw himself from it on to the sand, and thus effect his escape. He rejoined the Shekh at midnight, and his report was so alarming that the fugitives immediately rose and renewed their flight, saying, "Distance is safety from the wrath of God."

That portion of the city was buried the same night, but it does not appear that the entire city was overwhelmed at once, for there is no mention made of a

general stampede or *sauve qui peut* flight. On the contrary, it would seem that the citizens abandoned their homes in small parties, carrying their effects with them, though doubtless in some instances the carelessness engendered by a foreseen, and slowly advancing calamity overtook some in their neglect, and buried them in their false security.

Of the probability of this we had a remarkable illustration in the tenement mentioned above as still occupied at Ordam Padshah, though the court up to its verandah was already full of sand from the dune which had broken over its walls. Had the court, in this case been on the opposite side, and the house been the first to pass under the advancing sand, as we saw at the Langar Bulghar Akhund, it is easy to perceive how on toppling over the front walls (if it did not suddenly, by its weight, crush in the roof) it would shut up the inmates in a living tomb.

That this actually did occur at Katak in many instances is evidenced by the skeletons and desiccated bodies which are still occasionally seen in unearthed houses, with their apparel and furniture intact and uninjured, as is told with such apparent truth by the shepherds who roam that spot at the present day.

Shekh Jamaluddin, on quitting the doomed city, made for Acsu, and does not appear to have travelled with any large party, for when near the end of his journey he met the hunting circle, or *jirga*, of the new king, Toghluc Tymur, and unaware of the Mughol regulations against transgressing the cordon, was seized and carried to the presence of the king for the punishment of death which, according to the strict rules of the sport, he had merited, Toghluc was at the time feeding his dogs on the flesh of a wild boar they had killed, and on seeing the Tajik (a

term applied here to all people of Arab and Aryan descent in distinction to those of Turk and Mughol descent), and hearing his plea of ignorance in excuse of his fault, contemptuously asked him, "Say Tajik! art thou the better or these dogs?" The priest replied boldly, "Since I have the Faith I am the better. Were I without it, the dog would be the better."

The words made an impression upon the young Budhist, and led to his conversion at the hands of this priest. And a couple of years later, when he was firmly established as Khan of the Mughol, Toghluc Tymur, made a public confession of the faith before the Mulla Arshaduddin, son and successor of the Shekh who had died in the interim. The new convert was followed in his example by most of his nobles, and speedily revived Islam throughout his territories. But to keep to our subject.

The storm which drove the Shekh from Katak is described as of exceeding violence, and is stated to have filled the air with sand which fell as does rain from the sky. This description is illustrated by what we saw at the Cum Shahidan in the Langar before mentioned, and, if the dunes about Ordam Padshah were as high as some others further off, it is easy to understand how a violent wind or hurricane would carry the sand off them in vast quantity, and deposit it on buildings below to the leeward like rain falling from the sky, for once off the dune its own gravity carries it out of the force of the wind, which is intercepted below a certain level by the dune itself.

The shrine of Ordam Padshah is itself buried in sand, and poles tufted with yak tails mark the spot of the grave. But the monastery, and some almshouses around are built on small, clear spaces on the plain, which

appear here and there amongst the heaps of sand, and form as it were lanes running in the direction of the march of the sand-dunes. Some of the larger dunes, at a distance of three or four hundred yards off, are directed obliquely upon the monastery, but as they seem to advance here at a very slow rate—twelve years having passed since the dune broke into the court of the tenement mentioned without having yet completely filled its area, which is only ten or twelve paces wide—the confident faith of the venerable Shekh who presides over it may prove justified. "The blessed shrine has survived the vicissitudes of eight centuries," he said, in reply to our forebodings of the danger threatening its existence; "and please God it will survive to the end of the world."

The martyr whose memory is perpetuated by this shrine over his body, and by that of Hazrat Padshah at Daulatbagh near Kashghar over his head, was Sayyid 'Ali Arslan Khan, the supernatural son of the Bibi Miryam whose history has been before related. He took an active part in the wars for the propagation of Islam which were waged during the first half of the eleventh century between the brother kings Hasan and Husen Baghra Khan of Kashghar and the Chinese princes Boktarashid and Choktarashid of Khutan. The grand battlefield of their prolonged and bloody conflicts was the country immediately around and to the north of the range of sand hills called Cayragh, through which flows the Shahnaz river—a site now marked amongst the ruins of ancient towns and cemeteries by the victors' impress in the name of Yangi Hissar or "New Fort."

The whole locality abounds in interesting memorials of this sanguinary twenty-five years' war, and its records are scattered about in the keeping of the custodians of

the several shrines by which are perpetuated the, to Muslims, holy memory of the noble martyrs for their faith. To notice half of them as they deserve from a historical point of view would require a volume to itself. Here I must only allude to the manner of the death of the martyr at whose shrine we have found so much to interest the mind. The account, as given in the Tazkira Baghra Khan, is much to the following effect.

The indomitable bravery and valiant deeds of arms of 'Ali Arslan against his infidel foes had rendered his name terrible to the Khutan troops, and he more than once in single combat put to flight their renowned champion, a prince named Choktarashid. On these occasions 'Ali Arslan is described as performing his prayers with great solemnity at the head of his troops, and then proceeding to the field of battle, his heralds in front proclaiming his name and lineage, his dignities and titles, to meet the champion from the other side.

Both were always accompanied by a body of their own troops, and the combat usually became general at once before the adversaries could engage each other singly. The Muhammadan account naturally always claims the best of the encounters, but their heavy losses, and repeated failure to drive the enemy from his position on the Cayragh heights is proof that their arms made no very rapid progress. However, they inflicted such losses upon the enemy that their general, called Jagalu Khalkhalu, offered a handsome reward to any one who would devise a means of overcoming their renowned leader 'Ali Arslan.

There was an aged and poor *játlic*, or "Christian priest," who used to seek a living by passing from one camp to the other in search of odd jobs, and probably he was employed as a spy by both, who hearing of this

offer volunteered to impart to the Khutan general a secret by which he might overcome his Muslim antagonist. He was taken before the Budhist leader, and told him that if he timed his attack so as to fall upon the hostile army whilst they were performing the prayers of a particular festival close at hand, he would find 'Ali Arslan and his men unprepared, as they removed their arms and armour when engaged in their devotions.

Jagalu Khalkhalu took the hint, and dismissing his informer with a handful of gold, laid his plans accordingly. And on the day indicated fell upon the pious devotees with such secrecy and impetuosity that he immediately put their army to the rout, and surrounding 'Ali Arslan and 300 of his body-guard put them all to the sword. The victorious general then, carrying the head of his vanquished foe with him, pursued the fugitives into the shelter of the walls of Kashghar, and laid siege to the place, exhibiting the head of their prince to tempt them out to open fight. The date of this event is given as the 10th Muharram, 489 H. (1095 A.D.)

They were driven off by a relieving army from Andijan under Hasan and Husen Baghra Khan, and pursued with great loss to Kokyar, whence they effected a safe retreat to Chinshahr or Khutan. Hasan Baghra Khan then returned by way of Yarkand, which at once surrendered, and securing possession of the city by a garrison left in it, marched with a large army to perform the funeral rites of 'Ali Arslan and his fellow-warriors on the spot of their martyrdom. During the ceremony (so says the "Tazkira Baghra Khan") a *burán*, or hurricane blackening the sky with dust, overwhelmed the country in darkness, and buried the bodies in the sand. Hence the name of the spot Cúm Shahídán or "Martyr's Sands."

He built a *khâncâh* or "Monastery" here, and appointed a *Shekh* or "Superior" and forty attendants for the service of the tomb, which he pronounced a sacred shrine and place of pilgrimage. He gave some land, and the tithes of certain villages for the support of the establishment, and promised all sorts of benefits to accrue to those who visited it for prayer and supplication, if they conciliated the superior with gifts, and the martyr's soul with candles, and food for the poor, and recitals of the Curan.

No allusion is made in the *Tazkira* to the existence here of any fort or town, though the people of the place assured us there was formerly a town here, which is now buried under the sand; but its exact site is now quite unknown.

The name Ordam Padshah means "My camp, or Court King," just as Khojam Padshah means "My Khoja or Priest King," and does not necessarily imply the existence here of any court or royal edifice, though it is probable the Kashghar army may have had an outpost fort here similar to that held at Mazar Hazrat Begam by the Khutan army.

The monastery, as we found it, is a large court in which are contained a chapel, refectory, and kitchen, with about a dozen dormitories capable of accommodating, after the fashion of the country, about a hundred inmates. The whole has been recently restored by the Amir, and some new houses have been built in the hollows between the sand-dunes around it. The shrine is a very popular one, and three or four fairs are held here for its benefit every year. The principal one is held in Ashúr 'Ay, the third month, and attracts between fifteen and twenty thousand people, it is said, during the five days it lasts. It has a permanent population of about fifty families

who are as well to do and comfortable as those of Hazrat Begam are poor and miserable. They are quite isolated in the sand, and derive all their supplies from Yangi Hissar, which is twenty miles to the west by a direct path across the sands.

We halted a day here and were feasted on horse flesh, roast and boiled. If the European animal is only half as good in the flavour of his flesh, the diet is by no means to be despised. On resuming our journey we went due north for six miles, and then passed on to a wide saline-encrusted desert which was dotted here and there with little desiccated pools and patches of reeds.

At a mile from the shrine we passed three huts close together with a sand-dune in process of passing over them. The court-yard of one was full, and of the others nearly so. They were all occupied as usual by their owners, poor beggars dependent on the bounty of the monastery.

A couple of miles further on the dunes diminish in size and regularity of form, and finally end as small flat tumuli scattered about on the surface, and not much raised above its level. They present, however, an indistinctly striated appearance from N.W. to S.E.

Beyond the sands our path turned N.W. and led past some shallow pools to a roadside hospice around which were clustered eight or ten hovels occupied by beggars. Then past a long strip of shallow water, on which we found numbers of wild duck—apparently returned from their winter migration, for they quit the country when the frosts set in—across a bit of dry and blistered soil, in which our horses off the narrow track sunk to their knees, and, at about nine miles from the shrine, we came to a small hamlet called Dasht Bulac, or "Desert Spring." It is an hospice on the way to the shrine, and

has eight or ten huts clustered round it under the shade of some trees.

At this place our route turned due west towards a long strip of settlement which we reached in one hour. It extends out from Yangi Hissar in a N.E. direction like a long arm stretched out to the desert. We went on five miles, or an hour and ten minutes, through its fields, and alighted at the village of Arab, where we were accommodated in the house of a farmer blacksmith who had vacated his home for us. It was a comfortable and clean house, though of unpretending character, and was shaded by some splendid poplars, in the branches of which were set some empty gourds for the starlings to build their nests in. The fruit and other trees were just beginning to bud, and the fields were fresh ploughed for the spring crop. Here and there we saw fields of winter corn, and found the peasants at work laying on a top dressing of sand and manure to kill the salines that whiten the surface with their efflorescence.

Next day we rode twenty miles W.S.W. across a mostly waste tract of sodden saline land, and returned to our quarters at Yangi Hissar.

On the 17th April, after three weeks of more or less hazy weather, and persistent N. and N.W. winds which sometimes blew with sufficient force to obscure the air with a thick fog of impalpable dust, the sun shone out in a cloudless sky, and gave us a splendid view of the snowy hills to the west. The range runs N.W. to S.E. and the nearest spurs are only twenty miles off.

It presents three prominent masses which are separated by depressions that sink below the snow level. The southern-most is called King Cul Tágh and is above the road to Sarigh Cul. The second is called Tawiz Tagh, and the third, to the north, Chish Tagh; and between

the two latter is the road from Kashghar to Sarigh Cul by Tashmalik and Opal, and from it a road branches off westward over the Alai to Caratakin.

The hills are the home of the Kirghiz of the Nayman, Caraterit, and Chalterit tribes, with a few refugee Sayak and Capchac from the Caratagh and Tirak Dawan. The Caratagh hills connect Chishtagh with the Tirak Dawan, and beyond them to the west is the Alai plateau.

After this the weather again became hazy, and increasingly hot with sudden rapidity. The sun usually shone through a dense haze, which fortunately served to mitigate the intense glare of its light reflected from the white, sandy, and saline soil, as well as to diminish the force of its rays. When it shone in a clear sky the glare was insupportable to eyes unprotected by spectacles, and the power of its rays was very considerable. On the 17th and 30th April the sun thermometer registered their force at 139° F. and 140° F. respectively. The sudden transition from winter to summer was attended by an equally sudden transformation in the appearance of the country so far as concerned its cultivated tracts, for the desert portion hardly changed its character up to the time we left the country. Vegetation now burst forth all at once as it were, and filled the spot, but a few days before bare of any such traces, with foliage and verdure, and converted the whole settlement into a seeming paradise. During the whole month a N.W. wind blew with more or less steady persistence, and occasionally freshened to a gale which raised storms of dust lasting for hours, and more severe, both in intensity and duration, than those one usually experiences in the Panjab.

The appearance of spring was a welcome sight to the people, for their winter stock of forage and corn was be-

ginning to run low owing to the extra consumption of our party, added to the usual demands upon the stores of the place. Amongst other supplies allotted for the daily consumption of the embassy as guests of the Amir were sixty *charyak* (1200 lbs.) of maize corn (in place of barley which is seldom seen here), ten of rice, and six of flour, twenty loads of fire-wood, fifty of straw, and two hundred bundles of lucerne, and three sheep. The production of this daily ration soon fell heavily on the resources of the place, and some delay occurred once or twice in its collection.

Yangi Hissar is a dirty and decayed little market-town of perhaps five hundred houses. Its people are in keeping with their abode—poorly clad and ill-favoured, if not horribly ugly. Amongst them are a great many Khitay converts who seem to have been brought together here from all parts of the country. The place is an important military post and has a strong fort on the plain north of the town. In it are kept the government treasures, and some political *detenus*, and some members of the Amir's *harem*.

Whilst here we had an opportunity of making some inquiries into the character; and habits of the people of the country, of which I had received no very flattering description from the Turkish officers at Kashghar, whose impressions regarding their brethren in the far east appear to have been far in advance of the reality of their condition. Without concurring in the wholesale condemnation of them as "brute beasts" with one whose opinion was formed mainly from his experience of the Uzbak soldiery of Andijan in the garrison of Kashghar; and whose liberal education in the modern school of the Turkish capital perhaps raised him above the intellectual status of those he was here thrown amongst on terms of

brotherhood and equality very different from the circumstances of our contact with them as foreign guests enjoying the favour of the king—I find some difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory conclusion for myself.

We were so hedged in by the Andijani officials appointed to do us honour, and found everything so prepared to convey a good impression, that we saw next to nothing of the social life of the people amongst themselves; though we were constantly reminded by little incidents of every day occurrence of the vigilance of the domination under which they are kept. Our presence at the capital seemed to put everybody on his best behaviour, and we found matters going smoothly enough, though under an undefined sense of fear and insecurity prominent everywhere; but during our stay here (at Yangi Hissar), reports reached us of how much our departure was regretted by the people at Kashghar, because the capricious tempers in the palace had resumed their sway, and the bastinado and thumbscrew were making up the arrears of lost time.

Allowance must be made for the difficult position of the Uzbak conquerors, who hold the wide territory of their conquest with an army of less than twenty thousand Khocandi troops, as well as for the naturally to be expected hardships of a sudden transition from the tolerant rule of the Chinese to that of an intolerant Islam; and then the rulers may be justly accredited with holding what they have won with no more than the requisite vigilance and determination.

Under the Chinese rule, from all accounts, there seems to have existed a much wider range of personal liberty than is now permitted under the strict code of the *Sharia't*, and so far as the physical welfare of the people is concerned the change does not appear to be of un-

mixed benefit, particularly in the matter of meats and drinks and public morals.

Fermented liquors and spirits, and some kinds of flesh, which under the Chinese rule had become common to Muslim and Budhist alike, are now religiously suppressed as prohibited by law, and any infraction of the ordinance on this point is punished very severely. But opium and hemp, which are not included in the list of unlawful meats, are set under no restrictions, and are consequently abused to an alarming extent by all classes and both sexes. One of the Turkish officers in describing to me the society he had found at Kashghar, said that the people had no sociability or conversation, and that they stupefied their intellects with these drugs, and conducted themselves in their dwellings regardless of decency in the presence of strangers.

At Yangi Hissar are three divans for opium smoking. They are dark low chambers with a number of pillows arranged along the floor with a lamp at the side of each. And against the walls are shelves full of labelled and neatly folded bundles of the clothes and chattels left in pawn by the victims of the habit. The smoker on paying for his dose gets a pipe charged with a moist paste of the drug applied round the sides of a small orifice at one end of the tube. He lies down with his head on a pillow and turning to the lamp at its side draws two or three good whiffs of the flame through the opium paste, and then falls off to sleep.

In the time of the Chinese, it is said, the habit was not attended with such ill effects as now because the smokers, as generally the eaters, worked off the ill effects of the drug by active exercise in the pursuits of daily life, but now the people are deprived of this safeguard, and succumb more rapidly to its enervating effects.

How this can be does not seem very clear, though of the prevalence of the use of both drugs to an almost general extent there is abundant evidence. Under the Chinese the morality of the people in the relations of the sexes appears to have been very lax. Besides the painted sirens of the public markets, there was the *chaucán* always ready to contract an alliance for a long or short period with the merchant or traveller visiting the country, or with anybody else. Both the *jalab* and the *chaucán* are now suppressed, and the sex is subjected to the seclusion imposed by Islam, with its unequal distribution and concomitant vices. The sudden abrogation of their wonted privileges was not submitted to by the fair Tatars until many of their rebellious sisters were sacrificed as an exemplary warning to offenders against the law, and it is said that sixteen defiant champions for the liberties of the sisterhood were publicly executed at Acsu, before the marriage law of the *Sharia't* was accepted.

With the loose example set by the ruler and his army, however, the Tatar ladies find no great difficulty in evading the restrictions of the law, and amongst certain classes they avail themselves of the facilities for divorce to change their husbands much at their pleasure, and to no small profit to themselves personally.

For example a woman marries a man at Yarkand, and after two or three months she quarrels with him, and gets a letter of divorce from the Cazi, and the dower fixed on her. After the *'iddat* term fixed by law, she will marry a second in the same city and treat him likewise. She will then, without waiting the *'iddat* term, go to Yangi Hissar, and there, showing the first letter of divorce as proof of her freedom, marry a third husband, and having secured his dower get rid of him in the same way, to repeat a similar *rôle* at Kashghar, and so

on back to her home at Yarkand, where with a small fortune at command she may marry the man of her choice.

Whilst halted here there arrived from Yarkand to see the envoy a Panjabi Sikh who had come over the passes late in the season with a venture of goods for this market. He had experienced hard weather on the passes, and had been obliged to abandon some of his loads for other following caravans to bring on, or to lie there till his return homewards. He was now exultant in the success of his speculation, having cleared upwards of fifty per cent. profit. He asked me to do something for his feet which had caused him much suffering on the journey, and which still crippled him in his gait. I told him to remove the long Tatar boots he wore, and in doing so he left the tops of the great toe and its next of one foot in the boot, and presented the other foot with the top joints of the great toe and two next perfectly black and mortified from frost-bite some three months ago. They were in process of separation from the living flesh, and little was required but patience and a little simple dressing.

He had travelled with hardly more care and expense on himself than he had expended on his hired cattle, and apparently shared the hardships of the journey much on a par with them. The difficulties of this route are not to be properly appreciated till one has experienced them. The inconveniences of absolute desert, and the risks of high elevation, are permanent and unchanging, whilst the hardships of frosts and snows in winter are changed for the difficulties of floods and avalanches in summer.

Yet so great is the spirit of commercial enterprise that merchants are found to risk them all for the sake of the profits to be derived under the fostering encouragement

they find on both sides. Much has been heard during recent years of the prospects of trade in this direction, and the capability of its assuming important development. I will not pretend to offer an opinion on the subject, but may state some facts regarding it within my knowledge.

On the overthrow of the Chinese rule ten years ago the trade relations of Kashghar from Turfan westward were at once and completely severed from China. The southern states of Khutan and Yarkand then turned for the supply of their wants to the nearest markets, those of Kashmir and the Panjab, whilst the northern states from Kashghar to Turfan resorted in like manner to the markets on the Russian side of the passes in that direction. The trade connections thus formed in opposite directions have remained distinct to the present time. That is to say, the two southern cities are in the hands of British traders, and the rest are in the hands of Russian traders.

The ruler of the whole territory has concluded a Commercial Treaty with each of these two governments on terms equally favourable to both, and the question of success depends now upon the merits of the rival traders, and the suitability of their merchandise to the requirements and tastes of the people.

With the Kashghar government the goods of the British trader up to a certain limit will, so far as appearances indicate, find a ready market, if not with the local merchants; because cotton-prints, muslins, broadcloths, silks, &c., are in great demand for the troops and officials, amongst whom they are distributed by way of presents, and in lieu of pay.

With the people the wares usually brought by Russian traders, such as brass candlesticks, iron cauldrons and other hardware, with tea, and some coarse cotton-prints

of peculiar pattern, promise to keep the favour they at present enjoy.

As to the comparative facilities for transit on the opposite sides I can say nothing more than that, if they are as great on the north as they are on the south, the competitors will have a fair field for their peaceful rivalry, and that, too, over as hard and wearying bit of ground as is nowhere else to be found.

Having received intimation that the Kabul route was not available to us, and Col. Gordon having reported his departure from Panjah on the return journey towards India, the envoy on the 3d May marched with his camp from Yangi Hissar *en route* for Yarkand by the road we travelled before. We reached Yarkand on the 6th; and alighting at the Residency in the Yangishahr, on the following morning paid a visit to the Dadkhwah. He received us with his former hospitality, and very attentively forwarded the preparations for our onward journey by the Kokyar route, on which we soon after found supplies laid down at the several stages up to the Kashmir frontier.

The weather during our stay here was thick and hazy, and clouds of dust were raised by every puff of air. The temperature during our stay from the 7th to the 17th May inclusive ranged between a maximum of 93° F. and a minimum of 40° F., and on the 8th the sun's rays showed a heating power of 135° F.

CHAPTER XII.

On the 11th May Haji Tora arrived from Kashghar with presents from the Amir for the Queen and for the Viceroy; and after delivering them to the envoy, he prolonged his stay here for a few days to see us fairly started on our journey. He was accompanied from the capital by a M. Ladislas Berzenczey, a Hungarian traveller, who had, so he told us, set out from Buda Pesth to investigate the early history of the Magyars in the ancient seat of their forefathers. He had arrived at Kashghar some days after our departure thence, and now, on our making his acquaintance, favoured us with a very interesting account of his varied life and travels, and of the long journey he had just made through Russia and Siberia down to this place.

He did not at all approve of the customs he found in force in the ancient home of his ancestors, and was loud in complaint of his treatment at the capital. The six weeks of his hospitable detention there as the guest of the Amir appears to have weighed upon him more heavily than did the six months' durance of our travellers Messrs Hayward and Shaw upon them, and he altered his plans to proceed to India with us. The envoy, acceding to the wishes of the lonesome traveller, exerted his good offices on his behalf with the authorities, and they, with their well-known hospitality, furnished the stranger with an escort, and the necessary provisions for his journey, and conducted him in safety to the frontier; on arrival there he was received as a guest, and for-

warded on his way to Leh by Mr Johnson the Maharaja's governor of Ladakh.

On the 17th May, having received intelligence of the return of Col. Gordon's party to Sarigh Cul, the envoy, attended by Capt. Chapman and myself, paid a farewell visit to the Dadkhwah to thank him for his many kind attentions, and next morning we set out on our homeward march.

We left the Yangishahr at 5.30 A.M., and passing through the city went out at the gate by which we entered it on first arrival. There were few people in the streets, and we passed out more quietly, and unobservedly than such a party as ours would have done from any Indian town.

For an hour we went across a tract of cultivated land, delightfully fresh and green, and fording the Zilchak canal above a rickety rustic bridge, which was supported on two piers of boulders and faggots between the banks, alighted at some trees on the other side to drink a parting cup of tea with our friend Haji Tora. We here took leave of him with sincere feelings of respect for his talents, and gratitude for his friendship towards us, and with hearty good wishes for his prosperity and success.

We went on through the homesteads of Aral and Otunchilik, and in an hour and five minutes came to the Yarkand river. We forded it barely stirrup-deep in two wide streams, and in fifteen minutes more alighted at the Yangichak rest-house, twelve miles.

Next day we marched to Yakshamba Bazar, eighteen miles. The route went S.W. to S.S.W. over the cultivated meadow tract of Iykisu Arasi or "Mesopotamia" (between the rivers Zarafshan and Tiznaf) to Posgam, where we alighted for breakfast under the shade of some fine poplars, from the lofty boughs of which

issued the note of the cuckoo, and the call of the golden oriole.

From this we turned due south, and at six miles came to the staging bungalow, where we alighted. The country is remarkably well wooded, and presents a rich champaign freely irrigated by canals. The corn was just coming into ear, and the peasant was seen scattering the seed for the cotton crop. The common English field flowers and weeds abounded everywhere, and the path was overgrown with wild liquorice and blue iris.

Our next stage was Karghalik, sixteen miles, through a similar tract, crossing the river Tiznaf at the second mile out. Here we were accommodated in the rest-house which we occupied on our up journey. On the march, for the first time since our arrival in the country, we saw large flocks of sheep and goats at graze, and also some small herds of cattle.

At Karghalik we struck off the road by which we came last year for another to the right, and going due south camped at Beshtarik or "Five Poplars," twenty miles. In forty-five minutes we cleared cultivation, and entered on a wide gravelly and stony waste sloping to a ridge of sand-hills that run across the plain west and east. In one hour more we entered a gap in this ridge, and followed a gully, from half a mile to a mile broad between steep banks of conglomerate and shingle, up to our stage, where we camped under the shade of the clump of trees which gives it its name. A cold wind blew against us from the mountains to the south, and during the day raised clouds of dust about us. There are a few huts here, and some small patches of cultivation, but all around is desert waste and sand.

At this place we were glad to see the faces of two of our old Bhot coolies. They had just come in with a

letter for Captain Chapman, from Mr Johnson at Nubra, detailing the arrangements he had made for our passage of the Caracoram and Saser. They were very complete, and amongst others, included the collection of fifteen hundred coolies in Nubra, for the service of our camp.

Yolaric, twelve miles, was our next stage, route south. A few minutes' ride took us out of the Beshtarik gully on to a wide, wind-swept, pebbly desert crossed by a ridge of sand-hills to our right and front. We passed between them, and camped on the "Road rivulet" outside the village of the little settlement of that name. Yolaric consists of a collection of about twenty houses clustered together, and as many scattered farmsteads to the eastward in the direction of Ushac Bash, which is not visible from here, owing to the intervening banks and ridges of ground. A violent dust storm blew all the afternoon, and obscured even the orchards and trees around our camp.

Next day we marched to Kokyar, twelve miles. Route west, across a sandy ridge two miles off, and then up the gully of the Kokyar river, which flows in a narrow winding valley from south to north, between high ridges of sand and gravel, to the town itself which is the capital of this district.

It is a flourishing village of about a hundred houses crowded together under the shade of some large trees, and its suburbs extend as farmsteads up and down the river course for several miles. We found here numbers of yellow-hammers in the fields of corn, and a blue-throated warbler in the bushes along our route.

On the top of the ridge at the outset of this march we passed a shrine half buried in loose sand. As we approached it all our attendants dismounted, and, saying a prayer, led their horses past the hallowed spot. It is the

first time we have seen such veneration amongst this people. The shrine is called Sichcánluc Mazar or "The Mouse Shrine," and marks the spot where Calich Burhan, a son of Hazrat Afac, died in his flight towards India, as our guides informed us. In connection with the punctual discharge of their *devoirs* at the grave of the great saint's son, one of the party related to us an incident in proof of the sanctity of the spot, if it was not intended also as a rebuke to those of us who rode past without according to the memory of the martyr that reverence which it was, in this country at all events, held entitled to.

He said that there was formerly an irreverent Beg of this place (Kokyar) who neglected to dismount at the hallowed spot, and as he rode by a crow hovering overhead made a strike, and pecked his horse in the eye. The animal plunged, and reared with the agony of the wound till it threw the Beg, who, falling on his face upon the sand, knocked out his front teeth by the concussion, and bled to death there and then. The circumstance is notorious in the country, and nobody ever thinks of riding past Sichcánluc Mazar without dismounting at the shrine, and repeating a blessing on the saint and asking his protection on the road.

Next morning, the 24th May, we passed beyond the limit of the settled habitations, and entered the hills. The route goes mostly south, but turns from side to side towards south-east and south-west alternately. On leaving camp we crossed the muddy little stream of Kokyar on a firm pebbly bottom, and at three miles, clearing its cultivation, entered on a sandy and gravelly plain limited in extent by ridges of some height. We went across it to the south, and at another three miles again crossed the stream at Posar, which is a cluster of eight or ten

huts surrounded by small patches of cultivation, and shaded by some large poplar trees.

At this spot we left habitation and cultivation behind us, and entering the hills followed up the course of a long, winding, and narrow gully, and at twenty-four miles from Kokyar camped on an open flat above the dry watercourse which here runs between high banks of clay and shingle. The stage is called Ac Masjid, "the white mosque," and is a mere camp ground at the foot of the Topa Dawán, and apparently is not much used.

The hills on either side are of brown shale resting on limestone and sandstone, both of which here and there present outcrops between beds of shingle. The rocks are stratified, run from west to east, and dip suddenly to the north at an angle of from 70° to 80°. Vegetation is very scanty. The arnebia or "Prophet Flower," and the orobanche were found growing along the roadside on the gravel path and sandy banks on either hand. The artemisia and peganum covered the surface on the level tracts, and the thorny astragalus, and a kind of sedum formed little brakes here and there in the hollows.

The wheatear and a large rose-coloured finch fluttered about from stone to stone, whilst the chough sailed amongst the cliffs uttering his loud shrill cry; and the magpie flew backwards and forwards seeking a hiding place from the strange intruders on the privacy of his solitude.

The rise throughout the last half of the march is very appreciable, though nowhere sudden. The elevation of this place is about 8500 feet. It is a dreary spot on the verge of the sandy plain and its populous oases on one side, and the mountain waste and its desolate plateaux on the other. Our next stage was Chighlic, twelve miles. We left camp at 4.5 A.M., and reached the crest of Topa Dawán

or "The Earthy Pass" at 5.35 A.M. The road wound between south-east and south-west up a narrowing sulcus, and then rose by a steep ascent to the top of the pass. The path was deep in dust, and the slopes of the hills were of loose dry earth covered with tufts of artemisia and blue iris; whilst in their hollows was a thin and stunted brushwood of the astragalus, rose, and honeysuckle, and a number of little flowering plants upon their banks.

At about half way up we saw, through the gap of one of the collateral drainage gullies, a herd of six wild *yak* or *cutas* (Bos grunniens) at graze on the upper slope of a hill about a mile to our left. They appeared to be of huge size, and much more shaggy than their domesticated fellows. Two of them were crouched on the hill slope, and looked like great black rocks. All were of a dark colour, and one of enormous size—probably the bull of the herd—stood staring at us as we went by.

The elevation of the pass is about 10,200 feet, and its slopes are occupied by colonies of the marmot. The descent on the other side is at first south-west down a steep zigzag path, several inches deep in loose dry earth, on to an outcrop of white marble and slate rocks.

Here the road becomes narrow and difficult, and is much obstructed by fragments of rock. Below them it passes through a gap in which is a small spring. In its little pool I found some thread worms of a black colour, and two or three inches long.

Beyond this the road becomes easy, and descends gradually down a widening gully into the bed of the Tiznaf river. We reached it at 7 A.M., and turning due south up its course, in ten minutes arrived on our camp ground. It is on the beach under a ledge of green trap rock, and is shaded by a grove of poplar and willow trees. The shingly bed of the river occupies the whole of the narrow

valley here, except this little flat, which is grown over with coarse reeds of the kind called *chigh* (whence the name of the spot), and supports a small patch of brushwood of rose, tamarisk, honeysuckle, &c.

We here found a party of Yarkandis who had been sent out by the Dadkhwah in charge of the supplies laid down on this route for our camp; and a similar party of five or six of their fellows met us at each stage in advance up to the frontier.

The elevation of this place is about 8250 feet. The weather was changeable and chilly, and for two hours after noon thunder showers fell on our camp.

We did not march till 7 A.M. next morning, in order to allow the river flood to subside somewhat. It is caused at this season by the melting of the snows and glaciers of the Toraghil range, and sets in here daily at about sunset. It goes on increasing during the night till daylight, and then gradually subsides till the next flood comes down at sunset.

Our route wound from S.S.E. to S., and led up the river to Khoja Mazar, 18 miles. We forded the stream from side to side twenty-four times *en route*. The water was running swiftly girth-deep, and the passage was difficult owing to the great boulders in the way. The hills on each side are bare and wild, and consist of lofty granite and serpentine masses, which are here and there overlaid by hills of shale. They slope steeply to the river, along whose course, now on one side and then on the other, is a succession of small flats covered with a more or less thick brushwood of buckthorn, myricaria, tamarisk, rose, willow, fig, &c., with an abundant growth of coarse grasses.

At about three miles below camp we crossed a rapid noisy torrent coming down from the hills to the west.

In its valley there is, we were told, a copper mine which was worked in the time of the Chinese. On the way up to this tributary stream, which is called Kughda Su, we passed a number of abandoned and decayed smelting furnaces on the roadside.

Mazar Khoja is a camp ground on a shelving bank overlooked by a bare hill, at the foot of which stands a solitary shrine dedicated to the memory of a demented Khoja who perished here nobody could tell us when, or how, or wherefore. His name, our guide informed us, was Sultan Shekh Hisamuddin, surnamed Diwana or "The Demented." He died on some converting expedition against the infidels of this country whilst making his way up the Sugatlik Jilga, and the exact spot is, so our authority stated, marked by a stone pillar the size of a man, at two *tash*, or ten miles, up the glen. Its body is black, but the head is white like a turban, and it is propped up in a pile of stones resembling melons. His dying injunctions to his servants were, to load his body on a camel, and, setting its head homewards, to bury him at the spot on which the brute first rested. The camel sat down on the spot where the shrine marks his grave. If it serves no other purpose, it at least gives the locality a name. Next day we marched to Duba, 6 miles, and halted a day, the 28th May. We crossed the river, and followed up its right bank due south, and, crossing a tributary torrent from the east, camped on a turfy flat in the angle of junction between the two, where the banks are fringed with a belt of willow trees. The elevation here is about 10,000 feet.

The stream from the east is called Sugat Jilga, and that from the south Toraghil Jilga. When we arrived in camp, at a little after 8 A.M., the streams were rapidly subsiding, and just before the flood came down one could

cross dry shod stepping from stone to stone. At 4 P.M., however, the water came down with a sudden rush and tumultuous roar, and in a few minutes filled the channel from bank to bank with a muddy torrent of great force. Some of our party happened to be on the opposite bank at the time, and they had to spend the night there round their camp fires, with such supper as we could sling across to them in little bundles weighted with a stone.

Duba is a favourite pasture-ground of the people of this country, who are called Pakhpu or Pápú. They are a tall, very fair, and handsome race of a purely Aryan physiognomy, to judge from the few of their men who were here in attendance on our camp. They were very poorly clad, and carried matchlocks—the first armed men, other than government servants, we have met in the country—nevertheless they appeared to be very timid and subdued, and were very cautious in giving any information regarding themselves; and, as I thought, tried to mislead on a hint from one of our Yarkand attendants who on previous occasions had exercised his authority to such purpose. On the approach of our party they had removed their cattle and families into the glens off our route, and consequently we saw but little of them. They spoke Turki to our people, but I heard two of them speaking together in quite a different language. In the time of the Chinese there were fifty families who used to camp here, but now their number is reduced to fifteen or twenty.

They are spread through the vallies and glens of the district called Khalistan, which extends from the Topa Dawán to the Toraghil glacier, and embraces within its limits the head waters of the Tiznaf, and the upper courses of the streams that form the Yarkand river. Their chief town is called Chukchú, and is said to be two

days' journey west of Chighlik. It contains, according to one account I received, fifty houses, and according to another nearly two hundred.

The Pakhpu are hereditary enemies of their neighbours to the west—the Kunjud people—and, for centuries, have been habitually raided by them, and their captives sold into slavery in Wakhan and Badakhshan. Since the establishment of the Amir's rule, however, they have enjoyed security from this source of loss.

They are professedly musalmans of the *Shia'* sect like the Wakhi and Badakhshi, but they shave the head like the people of the plain. They live by tending cattle, and cultivating small patches of corn in the lower valleys. They denounce the Kunjud people as infidels, and describe them as a very powerful, handsome, and fair skinned people who wear long ringlets, and speak a language which is intelligible to the Wakhis, but not to themselves. Kunjud is said to be fourteen days' journey west of this, and beyond a branch of the Yarkand river which flows through a valley to the south-west of Toraghil glacier.

From Duba we marched to Gurunj Caldi, nine miles. Route south to south-east up the course of the Tiznaf river which we crossed at starting, and three times more *en route*, as well as two tributaries from the west. The river bed is obstructed by large boulders of granite trap which render the fords difficult. In winter the passage is made over the ice, and with more ease.

At Gurunj Caldi, which means "Rice left behind" —in allusion to some local tradition of a party of merchants being put to flight by the sudden rush of the river flood, which necessitated the abandoning of the rice in process of preparation for the evening meal— we camped on a turfy slope on which were a number of

marmot burrows, and some boggy springs. Its elevation is about 11,900 feet. On the way up we found rhubarb sprouting at the foot of some schistose banks, but vegetation generally, even along the river course, is very scanty.

The flood here came down at 2 P.M.—a violent torrent of liquid mud to all appearance.

Our next stage was Chiragh Saldi, "The lamp blew out"—in reference to the winds of the locality—fourteen miles. Route south-east up the course of the river, which here flows in a wide, shingly bed deep down to the left of the road. At four miles the river forks. One stream comes from the south-east, the other from the south-west. The former comes from the watershed of the Toghrásu tributary of the Caracash which we crossed on our upward journey.

We followed the course of the latter by a path high up its bank (where it flows in a narrow, rocky gully, the slopes of which are covered with granite boulders), and then crossing some moraine banks and bits of turf came to a wider and shingly channel, from which the mountains slope away in vast banks of granite and schist.

At about ten miles we passed Kirghiz Tam, which is a ruined outpost, originally erected here to protect the route against the Kunjud robbers. At this spot the river bends round a spur (across which there is a path when the channel is impassable) to the right; and beyond it we entered a wider channel, which we found was covered with a sheet of hard snow, under ledges of which the river flowed in four or five streams.

Our road went along the surface of this snow, now fast breaking up, and brought us to our camp in the angle of junction between two branches of the river. That to the south comes from Yangi Dawán, and that

to the south-west from Toraghil glacier. The elevation here is about 14,200 feet. Our camp was pitched on a pebbly surface in the midst of a thin jungle of tamarisk and hololachne.

Culan Uldi, "The wild horse died," twelve miles, was our next stage. Route south-south-east to south-east up a winding and narrowing gully to the Yangi Dawán or "New Pass." At the foot of the rise, which is short and steep over clay and shingle, but not difficult, there is a branch gully leading up to a snowy ridge close by to the west. On both sides of the pass we found a number of snow buntings and rose finches, searching about for what they could pick on the path. We reached the crest of the pass in fifty minutes from camp. Its elevation is about 15,800 feet, and its summit presents a wide view to the north-west, in which direction are seen some high snowy masses. In other directions the distant view is obstructed by high intervening ridges in the vicinity. The descent is easy for the first three miles, or less, down an earthy and stony gully. It then drops suddenly into a deep and narrow gorge, which we found blocked by a small glacier in process of dissolution. Its passage was by a very steep and slippery path, and very difficult—now across the ice, then along a ledge of rock with barely footing for the horse, and anon through little streams flowing in grooves on the surface of the melting ice. Here and there great fissures ran across the ice, and presented obstructions which occasioned some delay in the passage. The rocks in some parts were no more than twenty feet apart across the ice, and towered aloft in steep cliffs whose shade threw a gloom upon the passage below. We found five recently dead horses on the ice, and noticed that rump steaks had been cut out of one of them.

And we passed six or seven others standing on little ledges under the rock, unable to move backward or forward; poor creatures abandoned to die, for they were stripped of clothing and halter, and presented raw withers and famished barrels. They were some of the cattle employed to lay down the provisions for our camp.

Below this mass of ice, which we were told would entirely disappear in another month, though it yet fills the gorge for a length of nearly two miles, we entered on a wide and flat shingle bed which slopes gently between perpendicular banks of conglomerate. We went down it for a couple of miles, and emerged into the valley of the Yarkand river, and crossing the stream went east up its course for a mile, and then camped in a patch of tamarisk jungle.

The river bed here seems nearly level, is fully half a mile wide, and its low banks slope away in long sweeps up to the hills on each side. The elevation here is about 12,650 feet.

Next day, 1st June, we marched up the river to Kuk At Aghzi, "The mouth of the blue horse," fifteen miles. Here and there we went across great fields of hard snow, and through long stretches of tamarisk, myricaria, and hololachne jungle, and forded the stream from side to side several times *en route*.

The hills on either side are schists and slates, of considerable height, and perfectly bare. At about half way we crossed a tributary torrent from the south-west, and observed a glacier at the top of its gully. Further on, on the opposite side of the river, we crossed a dry gully full of granite boulders, apparently from a high glacier-topped mountain to the north-east. The ascent in this march is very gradual, and barely perceptible. The elevation of the camp stage is about 12,870 feet. On the

ground we found the carcase of a wild horse which had evidently only recently died, if one were to judge merely from its fresh state, and the marks it bore of having been eaten by wild animals. I counted its vertebræ, and found seven cervical, eighteen dorsal, and five lumbar; the same number as in the skeleton of a baggage horse which, a few days earlier, I examined on the Topa Dawán. During the afternoon a live one, probably its companion, created some excitement in camp by galloping right through it.

Weather cloudy and gusty, with rain at sunset, and snow during the night. Our next two stages were Kashmir Jilga, twenty-six miles, and Khapalang, twelve miles, up the river course. At two miles from Kuk At Aghzi we passed the ruins of an outpost fort, situated at the mouth of a glen which leads over a ridge to the east down to Shahidulla—a journey of two days. Beyond it, turning south, we went through a long stretch of tamarisk brushwood and grass in the river bed. It is called Kirghiz Jangal, and is a favourite summer resort of those nomads. A thunderstorm with hail passed over camp at Kashmir Jilga.

At Khapalang we camped in the angle of junction of two branches of the river, in a patch of jungle which extends several miles up and down the valley. At this place next morning, the 4th June, we parted from our Yarkand companions, Yuzbashi Tash Khoja, and the Beg of Kokyar, and their small following. Their good offices had been of the greatest service to us, and were received with many thanks, and some substantial keepsakes by way of acknowledgments of their attentions; and they were at the same time charged with kind messages to the Dadkhwah for the supplies laid down so satisfactorily for us. They then went back to render

to Colonel Gordon's party, following in our route, the same good offices they had performed for us, and we proceeded on our way up the course of the river which comes down from the watershed of Caracoram. At Actagh, twenty miles, we joined our former route, and met our old friends the Bhots, and received their salutations of "Jo! Jo!" with that satisfaction which the feeling of returning to tried friends produces. We found they had ample supplies for us, and had brought over about a hundred ponies for the service of the camp. At about five miles out of camp, crossing the river three times on the way, we came to a sheet of hard snow which filled its bed for the rest of the march, up to within a few hundred yards below our camp at Actagh, where it ceased. Our road led over its surface from side to side, or through tortuous fissures through its thick stratum as it passed from bank to bank. In some parts the snow was twelve or fourteen feet thick, and the sides of its fissures presented a greenish icy surface fast melting away into the several streams of the river flowing beneath it.

As we went on over its surface we entered on a scene quite different to anything we had seen before, and unique of its kind. The low vertical banks of the river bed slope away in wide sweeps of bare shale up to low ranges on which, between the snow patches still adhering to their broad sides, are seen the varied shades of the clays and shales composing them. The light earth stands out amidst the black, and the yellow mottles the red, and their wide surface rolls away into low ridges and banks against the sky, at intervals projecting into it some snowy cones, which seem to struggle up from below to show themselves here on the top of the world. Not a blade of vegetation is anywhere to be seen, and in the wide waste of departing snow and reappearing soil not the

least remarkable feature of the scene is its drainage system.

Great, shallow, shingly water-runs mark the ground on either hand with wedge-shaped gullies whose points penetrate the hills, and whose broad bases stud the river course, spreading it out as it were over the whole face of the country, whilst themselves merge into it by slopes that are barely perceptible. The long line of ridge in front of our route looks, seen as it is here against the sky, like the edge of a platform raised above the world; and the increasing effects of a rarefied atmosphere tell by their inconveniences that we are really mounting beyond its ordinary levels.

From Actagh we marched to Brangtsa at the foot of the rise to the Caracoram pass, and crossing it next day camped at Daulat Beg Uldi. About the pass there was a good deal of snow in the process of thaw, and the soft soil on either side was saturated with its water. Off the beaten track, and in parts on it, our cattle sunk to the knees in its bogs, and throughout the march laboured over the heavy soil, whose mixed shingle and clay was as soft as a ploughed field after a fall of rain, and considerably deeper in mire.

From Daulat Beg Uldi, leaving the Cumdan route, now impracticable owing to its floods, on the right, we went south-east to south across the Dipsang plateau towards the Burtsi camp ground, 26 miles distant.

The plateau rises up in front of our position by a long and wide sweep of the ground, and we ascended to it over a long upland after crossing a boggy ravine at a mile and a half out from camp. It drains the eastern part of the Daulat Beg plateau into the stream formed by the rivulets from the heights on and about its western part at the Caracoram pass. We were camped on one of

these below the pass, and which lower down joins the Shayok at Gyapthang. After crossing this ravine we went up the course of a frozen stream draining into it, and rising on to the Dipsang plateau, found ourselves on the veritable top of the world. All around appeared mountain ranges, none of which are less than twenty thousand feet high, whilst to the west rose two lofty peaks of much greater height; yet in the distance they seemed below us, for the land around sloped away down on all sides. In whichever direction we looked the sky appeared below us, and the world sunk down out of view. In fact we felt as if we had risen above the world, and were now descending to it in front of us. The Caracoram left behind us appeared like a mere crest on the undulating surface of the country, and the mountain ranges in front, and on each side seemed to struggle up from below to reach our level.

It was an extraordinary scene, and one not to be easily effaced from the memory, impressed there as it is with the recollections of its utter desolation and solitude, and the hardships of its inhospitable air.

It was on the passage of this plateau, whose elevation is about 17,500 feet above the sea, that our lamented and talented comrade, Dr Stoliczka, suffered that derangement of the vital functions, which terminated in his death at Murgi, two stages further on.

The Dipsang plateau is about eight miles across from north to south, and presents an undulating surface, the soil of which is a spongy saline charged mixture of clay and gravel. When we crossed there was very little snow left, and the path was strewed with the bones and skeletons of dead cattle, though in no greater abundance here than in many other parts of the route. A solitary antelope crossed our path on the rise up to the plateau,

and in its passage we saw some small flocks of the Siberian grouse *(syrrhaptes)*, of which I shot some specimens the day before on our way across the Caracoram.

The descent from the plateau is down a steep gully into a deep and tortuous chasm, which is overhung by high cliffs of red clay, and conglomerate. The passage is very steep and narrow, and goes through the midst of a turbid torrent which fills the channel, and is as red as the ground it passes over. In six minutes we passed out of this gap, and with its stream entered into a widening river bed which opens into a broader channel coming down from the north-west. We entered the latter at a camp ground called Kizil Langar, about six miles from the plateau.

The hills on each side are very lofty, and present long slopes of crumbling *débris*, which now and then are set in motion downwards by stone avalanches from above. At Kizil Langar we found the river channel strewed with great stones which had recently rolled down from the hill tops, but fortunately none were falling at the time of our passage.

Beyond this we went south-east down the course of a wide-spread stream, crossing it repeatedly on a loose pebbly bed, and at ten miles on camped at Burtsi on a ledge above the river bank. The elevation here is about 15,660 feet. On the way down one of our Bhot coolies lost his footing whilst crossing the stream below Kizil Langar, and was drowned, and carried away by the flood which overwhelmed him in its passage.

Next day we marched to Murgi, twelve miles. Below camp, just opposite a glacier-topped hill, the route turns sharp from south to south-west and west down a very rough and winding defile. The road is very difficult, and crosses the river repeatedly, and avoids narrows, and

rapids, and rocks by steep paths, but little better than mere goat tracks, which run across along the face of the slopes of the *débris* that cover the projecting bluffs now on one side then on the other of the torrent tumbling down between them.

The hills are of quartzose limestone, similar to those at Cumdan, and present many caverns on their upper slopes; whilst the hollows of their spurs are occupied by small glaciers. For the last five or six miles of the route the river is a foaming torrent, and dashes noisily over huge rocks which fill the dark, deep, and narrow passage through which its waters buffet their way. It is only passable at one or two places, and always with difficulty, at this season owing to floods, and in winter owing to snows.

At Murgi, the elevation of which is about 14,800 feet, it receives another gully from the west (in which we camped), just below where it passes through a deep cleft in the hills; and at that spot the road goes over the high terraced flat which projects into the angle of their junction. On it are the remains of a breastwork of considerable strength originally. It runs up and down and across the hill slope, and ends at the edge of a cliff which drops straight to the river. It was built, as was a similar one at Tutyalac, some four hundred years ago by the Bhot *Kahlon*, or "governor," of Nubra, who was, so we were informed, called Suttim, as a bar to the progress of Mirza Ababakar in his attempts to invade Tibat. But they were both forced, and demolished some half century later by his successor the Sultan Sa'íd.

We found the weather at Murgi very bleak and cold, and next day, the 9th June, set out for the Saser Brangtsa, ten miles, in a heavy fall of snow. We halted there a day, weather-bound by what proved to be a very

opportune fall of snow. For despite its discomforts and difficulties, it rendered the pass ahead safer of passage than it would have been under the more agreeable sunshine, with its danger-working action on the glaciers.

Our route led up the gully to the west, and at two miles passed the Chongtash or "Big Stone" camp ground, which is a turfy flat around a great erratic block of stone that rests on the saddle-shaped watershed of the pass. At five miles beyond it we descended a steep bank into a deep gully full of sheet snow, and, crossing it, rose by a steep climb up to a path high up on its other side, and then, turning south, followed it down to its junction with the river Shayok a mile or so below the Braugtsa ford.

Here we were met by Mr W. H. Johnson, who had prepared a couple of boats to take us across the river in case its flood were otherwise impassable, and was now waiting our arrival with a small army of Bhot coolies, and yaks, and horses to help us through the Saser. Amongst the other signs of our welcome back to British territory were supplies of champagne, sherry, and other liquors, with tins of Europe delicacies of sorts, &c., which the Maharaja's kindly forethought had sent forward to revive us after the hardships of the journey across the passes.

We found that the cold weather which had just set in had materially diminished the flood of the river, and our camp, in consequence, made its passage with comparative ease, though an unfortunate coolie was, like his comrade above Burtsi, carried away and drowned in its current.

From this point we marched along our former route by the Saser pass and Tutyalac to the inhabited valley of Nubra. We entered it at Changlung, which now in the fresh verdure of spring shone in its belt of sand and rocks like an emerald set in silver. We passed over the

glaciers of Saser in the midst of a snow storm, and saw nothing of its glorious and majestic scenery, of which our former passage had left such vivid recollections. Instead of its noisy torrents, and crushing avalanches we experienced only the less hazardous difficulties of snow drifts and cold winds.

At Changlung, with the sight of the peopled world before us, we shook off the memories of the desert plateaux and all their asperities, and in the charming vallies of the Nubra and the Shayok lived again amongst friends, and found freedom and confidence in place of what we had left behind us. From Changlung we marched by the stages of Panamik and Tagar to Satti through a prosperous and fertile valley in the full radiance of spring foliage. At Satti we diverged from our original route, and, continuing up the course of the Shayok for twelve miles more, turned out of its bed to the right, and, rising round a high hill, at another seven miles camped at Diggar, an inconsiderable village on an elevated terrace high up in the mountains, and through the midst of which flows a brisk and clear mountain torrent. Its elevation is about 12,900 feet, and the change affected several of our party severely, and in some produced alarming symptoms of prostration. It is a very wild spot, surrounded on three sides by lofty hills, and looking down on the other to the low spurs which conceal the Shayok valley from view.

Several of our cattle sickened here, and three died from eating the wild herbs growing along the roadsides. Amongst them I noticed the hyosciamus was very abundant.

At this place, near the top of the village, there is a gigantic figure of Chamba, similar to the one we passed on the march from Shargol to Khärbo. It is carved on

the east face of a large isolated block of granite, and in front of it are the decayed walls of a hut, which had been built evidently to conceal the figure from the eyes of a destroying enemy.

Next day, the 17th June, we marched to Leh, twenty-four miles. We left the village by a path that wound amongst a rough waste strewed all over with large granite boulders, and rose on to a moorland between high hills of bare rock. Picking a way over this, amongst peat bogs and masses of broken granite, we at six miles came to some Polu huts at the foot of a long gully which slopes up to the pass. The ground was covered with snow, and dangerous to cattle off the path owing to the rough stones hidden under its soft covering. At six miles more we arrived at the crest of the pass, 17,600 feet high, and, there dismounting, descended on foot to some Polu huts on the other side by a very steep and zigzag path. Beyond this we followed the glen down to the Sabbú village, and then, turning west across a sandy slope, passed through a gap in a ridge of granite into the basin of Leh. And then the route went north up to the town at the top of the slope.

At two or three miles out we were met by Captain Molloy, the British Joint Commissioner at Leh, and a number of the merchants of the place, and with their welcome greetings as the first symptoms of the civilisation, liberty, and order that we were returning to, we went on through the little town to our camp in the Residency compound beyond.

At the entrance to the bazar the envoy was received by a military guard, and a salute of fifteen guns was fired from the fort away to the left, whilst the house-tops and the balconies along our route were crowded with the Tatar residents of the place, bowing their wel-

come to the usual tune of "Jo, Jo," with that look of good-nature for which they are noted.

We felt we had now left all difficulties behind us, and had once more returned to security, freedom, and justice. And none appreciated the change more thoroughly than our native camp followers, who were again at the threshold of their own homes, and more than ever grateful that their lot was not cast under the despot's rule.

For myself, as we neared the end of our journey, I viewed the change under a different aspect, and my mind ran over the countries beyond on this side of our Indian possessions, and over those beyond on their western side, and, comparing their past history, and present conditions, with the progressing course of events, very speedily perceived, and gave form to the indications of the coming future. It has been my lot to travel over the countries beyond the western frontier of our Indian Empire, and I have now seen a little of those beyond its northern frontier, and, though still lamentably so, I am not altogether ignorant of the region which lies beyond our north-west frontier and between those two points, for I have enjoyed the advantages of a position on that part of the frontier which offered least obstacles to its study. And I can now, from personal observation, and many years of attention to the subject, very easily understand how it is that every invasion of India has been from the west, whether the conqueror came originally from that direction or from the north. And I believe that, had the country beyond our western frontier been similar to that beyond its northern, history would never have had to chronicle any one of those invasions, which from the time of Alexander to that of Nadir, form the great epochs

in the varied annals of India. Nay, I believe that, had the geography been reversed, that is, had the western frontier been like the northern, and the northern like the western, then all those invasions would have been recorded as following the northern, and not the western route.

The Musalmans of India class themselves under the four great ethnic divisions of Arab, Pathan, Mughal, and Shekh. This last comprises all the indigenous tribes converted to Islam, and the others represent the different conquering nations of India. They may be likened to the Norman, Dane, and Saxon of our own history, the Gael being represented by the Shekh. Notwithstanding their very widely different seats, these conquering nations all entered India by the same route. In fact, all the invasions of India, of which we have any knowledge prior to the time of Nadir, followed the same route by the Kabul passes, and owed their success to the co-operation of the highlanders in that direction, who always sided with the invader, because their country was open to assault from that quarter; and because, whilst resistance was hopeless, co-operation with the assailant promised a glorious career of success on the wide field of India's rich domain. This result, however, which has been so often proved by the facts of history, is not possible on the northern frontier, because the circumstances are reversed, and the conditions are incompatible in that direction. The highlanders in that direction are open to assault from the south, but they are protected against the north by the nature of the country which forms their barrier in that direction.

Of the prohibitive nature of this natural barrier we have abundant proof in the mere fact of its neglect as a trade route, or even as the route for direct communica-

tion with the home country during the flourishing period of the Mughal Empire in India.

Even the Afghans, those hardy and enterprising warrior-merchants, who for successive centuries have supplied the markets of Central Asia with the merchandise of the southern countries, prefer the difficulties of the Suleman and Hindu Kush passes—with the perils from their robber bands, the uncertainties of battle with their predatory tribes, and the endless exactions of their hosts of tax-collectors—to the more terrible obstructions of nature which face them on the death-dealing heights and desert plateaux of the Tibat mountains. More than this, the very liberal expenditure and fostering protection of the paramount government during recent years have not produced results commensurate with the means employed in this direction for the promotion of its trade. And I have no doubt that, were the total of expenditure on fairs and trade commissioners, and missions, &c., during the past ten years, balanced against the profits of the entire trade over the Tibat passes during the same period, the impracticability of the route as a general highway would derive further confirmation from the revelations of the respective figures.

The subject is a suggestive one, and of the highest importance to us in India on the south of these grand barriers, because of the material interests connected with it. And at this juncture the more especially so on account of the steady growth of the Russian dominion over the wide region to the north of them. The progress of Russia there now is but a repetition on the steppes to the north of the mountains of our own career, not so very long ago, on the peninsula to the south of them.

The might which was our right—we must remember

this point—against the Aryan nations of the south is none the less her right against the Tatar peoples of the north. For each on his own side gives to a kindred race the blessings of civilisation in place of the curses of barbarism. Each has for its object the prosperity, peace, and freedom of its subjects, according to its own established forms of government.

The main difference is that Britain on the south has matured her conquest and grown up in the full vigour of the strength acquired by a long term of tenure; whilst Russia on the north is yet in the course of growth, and lacks the vigour of maturity.

As the Sutlej and the Indus have not served to give us a frontier on the plains of India, neither can we expect the great rivers of the steppes of Tartary to give them such a limit on the plains of Central Asia. As we on the south side have been compelled to advance to the foot of the hills, and exercise sovereign influence over their princes on our side of the great watershed of the Asiatic continent—the great natural division of its northern and southern climes and nations—so may we expect a like force to impel them on to similar positions on its north side.

There is much to be said and studied on this most interesting and important subject, but as the inquiry is beyond the purpose of this work, I will content myself with this brief allusion to it. In this place merely reminding the reader that the foreshadowed approximation of the frontiers of the two great Christian powers in Asia is an eventuality, the consummation of which cannot be considered very remote from this time, unless indeed, the present rate of Russia's advance towards the intervening boundary receive an unforeseen, however improbable such may be, check. And that, what, under any circum-

stances, concerns us is the proper appreciation of the nature of our own position on this same frontier of junction, and the assurance that we are there prepared to keep our own rights and respect theirs. If in these points we are found to be as we ought to be, then we may shake hands across the passes with our Northern neighbour, and, with the rest of the Christian world, bid him God speed in his mission of civilisation in the greatest sinks of iniquity in all Asia.

We halted a few days at Leh, and were to have resumed our march on the 22d June, but during the night an express messenger arrived from Colonel Gordon's camp with the melancholy intelligence of the death of Dr Stoliczka at Murgi on the 19th instant; and the information that his body was being brought on for interment. This sad news was a great shock to us all, for our friend and comrade had won our esteem no less by the high order of his scientific talents than by the genial character of his social virtues.

The body arrived during the afternoon of the 23d, and we had the melancholy satisfaction of performing the last offices to the remains of one whom we had learned to admire, and whose loss we lamented.

The next day we resumed our march, and arrived at Srinaggar on the 6th July, receiving on the way even more abundant assistance and more assiduous attention than on the upward journey. In fact, such a large number of men and cattle had been withdrawn from their usual occupations for the service of the embassy, that the tourists who annually flock into the country were for the time somewhat incommoded in their movements.

We passed several families on our way down from Sona Marg (where since our passage last year a couple

of new houses had been built by the Kashmir authorities for the British Commissioner), who were delayed in their camps for want of carriage. I felt less pity for the pleasure-seekers than for the unfortunate men who are pressed into their service during six months of every year, and on this occasion into ours.

Between three and four hundred European tourists roam this country during six months of every year, and as a rule none of them make any provision for their carriage. They are all dependent on the country for their means of transport within its limits. This necessitates the abstraction from their homes and fields of something like six thousand men during half the year, in order to carry their camps about from place to place; and of the amount of oppression it leads to few can have an idea.

Of the hundreds of English officers and their families who, during six months of every year, visit the Kashmir territory and enjoy the hospitality of the Maharaja, there are few, very few, who appreciate the benefits and privileges they are freely accorded within the territories of this most hospitable of Indian princes.

It is the fashion to abuse the native administration of Kashmir, and charge it with every species of oppression and corruption. Whether this is just or unjust I will not take on me to say. But this I do say, that of those who join in the outcry against the authorities of this tributary state, there are few, if any, who consider the part they themselves play in bringing about the very oppression they complain of.

I resided in the valley on duty during the season of 1869, and had ample opportunity of ascertaining the effects of our annual invasion of the country upon the people, as well as the impression our conduct in

it made upon the strangers who, in the pursuit of their commercial business, frequented the capital from all the outlying countries on the north, west, and east, —men who carried away their opinion of the Englishman from what they had seen of him in Kashmir, and spread it as the character of the nation in the cities of Afghanistan, Turkistan, and Tibat. I observed also the benefits and privileges we enjoyed in the country, and the benefits we are satisfied that we confer upon it; and as to the last it is my positive conviction that they are outweighed by the evils attending them.

It is needless here to enter into detail. It is enough to say that the roaming of hundreds of Europeans, independent of each other all over the country, necessitat a vigilant activity on the part of the authorities, and the employment of a large body of police officers, purveyors, clerks, coolie drivers, and others to look after their safety, attend to their wants, supply their carriage, procure their provisions, &c. &c., in all parts of a thinly-peopled and wild mountainous country. How well this is done is proved by the fact that instances of insult, robbery, or assault, are never heard of.

From my own knowledge and observation, I can state that in no other part of India with which I am acquainted (and I have travelled in the three presidencies), not even in territory under our own administration, is the European so promptly and cheerfully served, and so safely protected, as he is in Kashmir, and nowhere else does he exercise the liberty of the subject to the extent that he does in that same territory.

Yet, notwithstanding these facts, there is a chronic outcry against the governors of the country, and the local English press rails at their shortcomings with a

vehemence unbefitting the occasion, and altogether forgetful of their claims upon our forbearance. Our conduct towards Kashmir does not escape notice in the neighbouring states, and whilst Kabul and Nepal hold up the finger of caution saying, "Beware! keep out the European," others, less independent, remark on the boldness of our words against Kashmir, and compare it with our discreet language towards her neighbours.

To us, returning from the independent state of Kashghar, the change in the character of our experiences in point of treatment was most remarkable, and no less so was the facility with which, on entering Kashmir, we recovered our conscious superiority as lords in the land. With the Indian there was none of that air of superiority of which we had seen so much, and which the Tatar official so courteously appropriates in his dealings with those whom he means to honour; and in its absence, accommodating ourselves to the circumstances of the case here, disappeared the deference it naturally drew from us as guests in their country. In its place we here found a cheerful readiness to meet our every wish, and a solicitous care to provide our every want, and with these ready attentions naturally returned the sense of our position as servants of the paramount government, and we felt at home amongst our own people. The change indeed from Foreign to British territory was complete in other respects too, and for the third time was I made practically acquainted with the relative merits of the governments ruling on the one side and on the other.

Beyond the border prevail disorder, oppression and despotic caprice. The natural resources of the soil are undeveloped, commerce struggles for bare existence, and society is sunk in the barbarism of ignorance. Within it are found order, prosperity, and established law.

The land is worked, trade is active, and the people advance in the path of knowledge. And with such differences between the influences of civilisation and barbarism, who can wish to deny to the oppressed States of Central Asia the blessings of good government which are pressing upon them, whether they receive them from the north or from the south, or from both in their just proportions?

At Srinaggar the life and activity, the wealth and prosperity, the freedom and enjoyment that met the eye seemed something great by contrast with what we had left behind us to the north of the passes. We stayed here a couple of days as the Maharaja's (His Highness being absent at his winter capital, Jammu) guests in the Ranbir Bagh, where we met Mr Shaw who was on his way up to Kashghar, accompanied by Dr Scully and an escort of the corps of guides; and then I accompanied the envoy as far as Murree.

We set out on the evening of the 7th July and went by boat to Baramulla, and thence travelled by express "dooly dak," and arrived at Murree on the 12th July, having left it on the 18th of the same month in the preceding year.

The camp marched on by the regular stages, and in due course the Embassy was dissolved, and its members, after sending in their several official reports, dispersed to their different departments.

THE END.

